



Reimagining Necklace Road

Exploring new forms of public space for Hyderabad City

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Preface

This architectural thesis proposal, submitted towards the completion of the ‘Contemporary Project’ specialization for Masters in Advanced Architectural studies at ETSAB (Escola Técnica Superior d’Arquitectura de Barcelona), has been organized in three parts. The first part is a non-linear assimilation of essays that aims to present a subjective reading of ‘place’ in the context of the city of Hyderabad. Albeit by distinct people from diverse backgrounds and interests the readings on which these essays are based, are in coherence with a personal vision and help in constituting the lens through which the reality of ‘place’ and ‘city’ along with their many layers are viewed. The essays also present a way of articulating the different threads of thoughts that have led to the final design proposal. The second part is a more linear narrative that aims to present an objective reading of the physical dimension of a place in the city. ‘Place’ in the context of this thesis is the urban waterfront and waterfronts of two port cities, Barcelona and Mumbai, are studied and compared with the idea of reflecting on the urban lakefront of Hussain Sagar in Hyderabad. The third part is the design narrative that advocates for architectural intervention as a means of introducing new forms of public space along Necklace road while attempting to address urban issues related to its context.

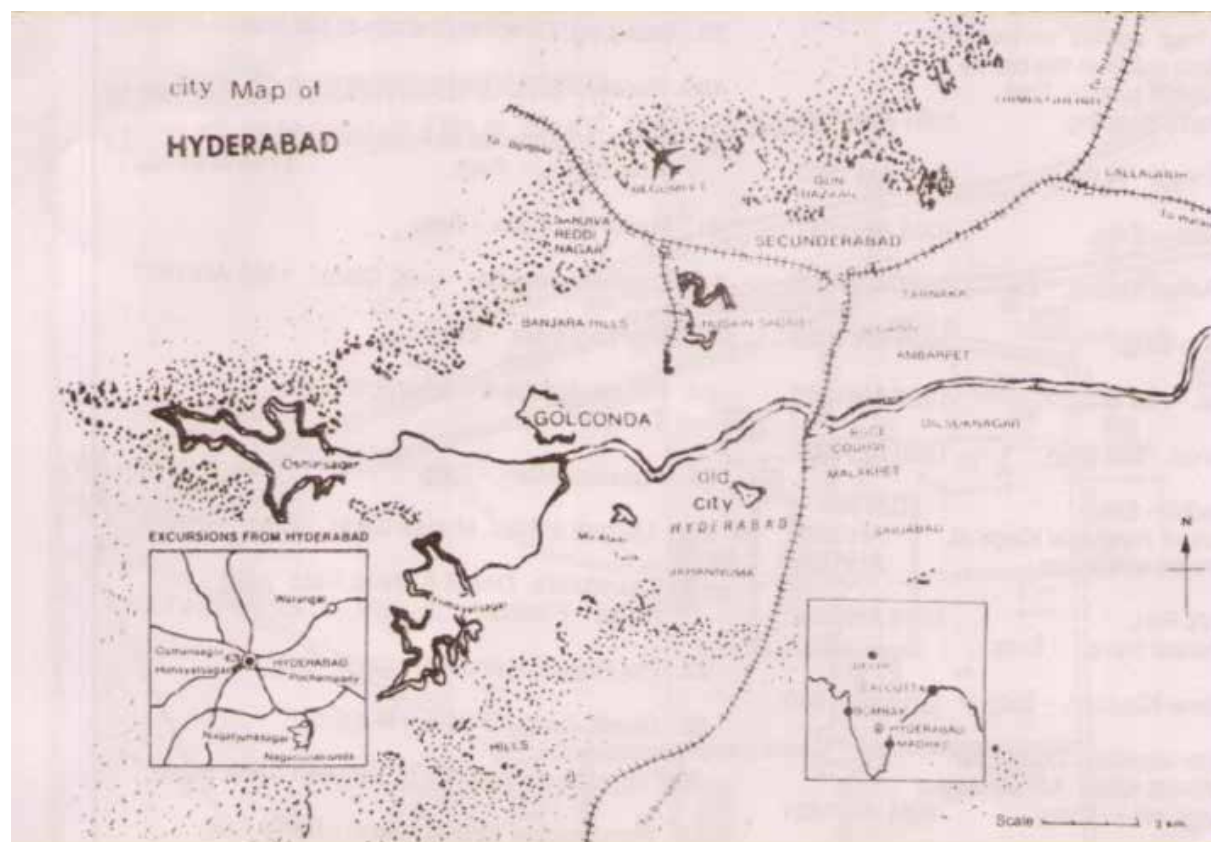
Acknowledgments

This thesis would not have been possible without the whole hearted support of my tutor Professor Aquiles Gonzale and generous insights from Professors Eduard Bru, Xavier Llobet and Josep Maria Fort. I am thankful for the contribution and time of good friends Architect Zoha Razvi and Architect Rohan Chavan. The continuous emotional support and encouragement of family and friends have helped me endure the difficulties of living and studying in a foreign country.

Introduction

The city of Hyderabad in the deccan plateau region of India has an urban history of more than 400 years. The 15th century walled city of Golconda, that now lies to the south-west of the contemporary city was the first centre of urban growth and the capital city of the Qutub Shahi dynasty. In the late 16th century a new walled city was planned to the south of the Musi river, as the fortified city of Golconda could no longer contain the increasing population and was plagued by diseases due to its unhealthy sanitary conditions. Subsequently the city expanded to the north of the river and with the British cantonment set up in Secunderabad , further expanded to the north and north-east.

Two decades ago, Hyderabad city, which is the capital of the south Indian state of Telangana, set out on the path of economic restructuring while opening its doors to foreign direct investments. The city was re-branded from being a historic city to a hub of information technology. The need to implement this vision on a fast track basis saw virgin agricultural lands in the north western part of the city transform itself into an urban area. This has led to massive urban restructuring in the past decades with unprecedented focus on developing new infrastructure, road network and public transportation. In this haste to build new infrastructure the public domain of the city has been neglected. Open spaces do exist but are neither structured nor thought out carefully to ensure proper connectivity, usage and qualitative improvement of urban space. What we now see is the city as an amalgamation of open and built spaces that are losely tied and do not engage in a dialogue. Thus missed opportunities in terms of public space creation are omnipresent and yet unacknowledged. This thesis attempts to bring back the attention onto the ‘heart of the city’; Hussain Sagar lake, as an important public space. In particular the focus is on ‘necklace road’ and proposing a design strategy through new forms of public space that will help connect the severed heart back with the city.



1 The City

Hyderabad, India

1. Digital copy of 'Golconde'. Oil on canvas, Rene Magritte. 1953. Source- www.menil.org



1.1 Golconde City of Wealth

The source of inspiration for the title 'Golconde' for Rene Magritte's 1953 painting lay far south-east in the subcontinent of India; a land the artist might have never visited himself. Though it is widely known that the painter's poet friend Louis Scutenaire helped name this masterpiece, it is intriguing what might have been the instigation behind what apparently seems like a non-contextual allusion in terms of time, place and culture. This surrealist painting that famously depicts a plethora of identical men clad in black suits and bowler hats floating mysteriously against the backdrop of non-descript mundane architecture and a bright blue sky has often been interpreted as a critique of capitalism.

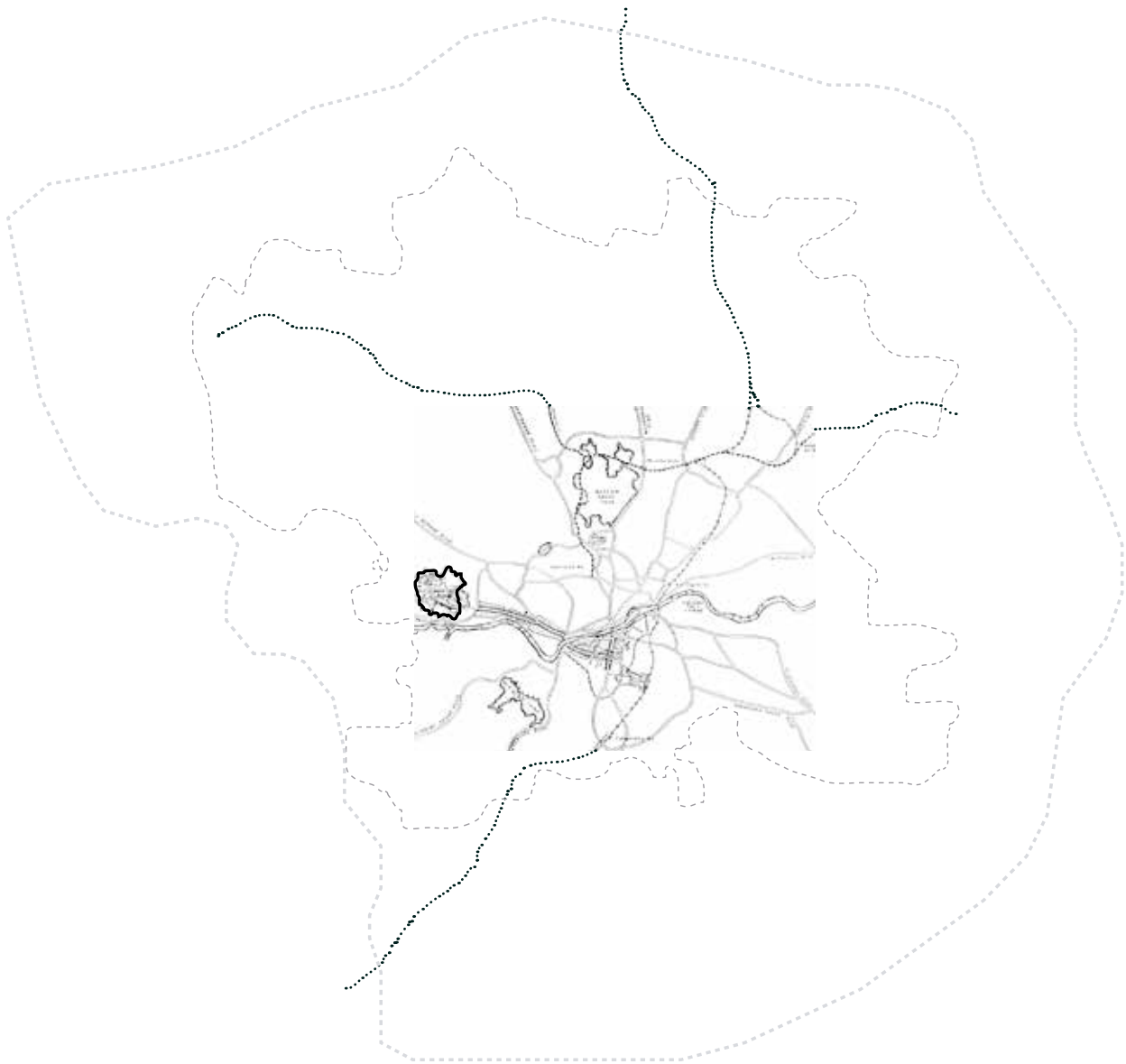
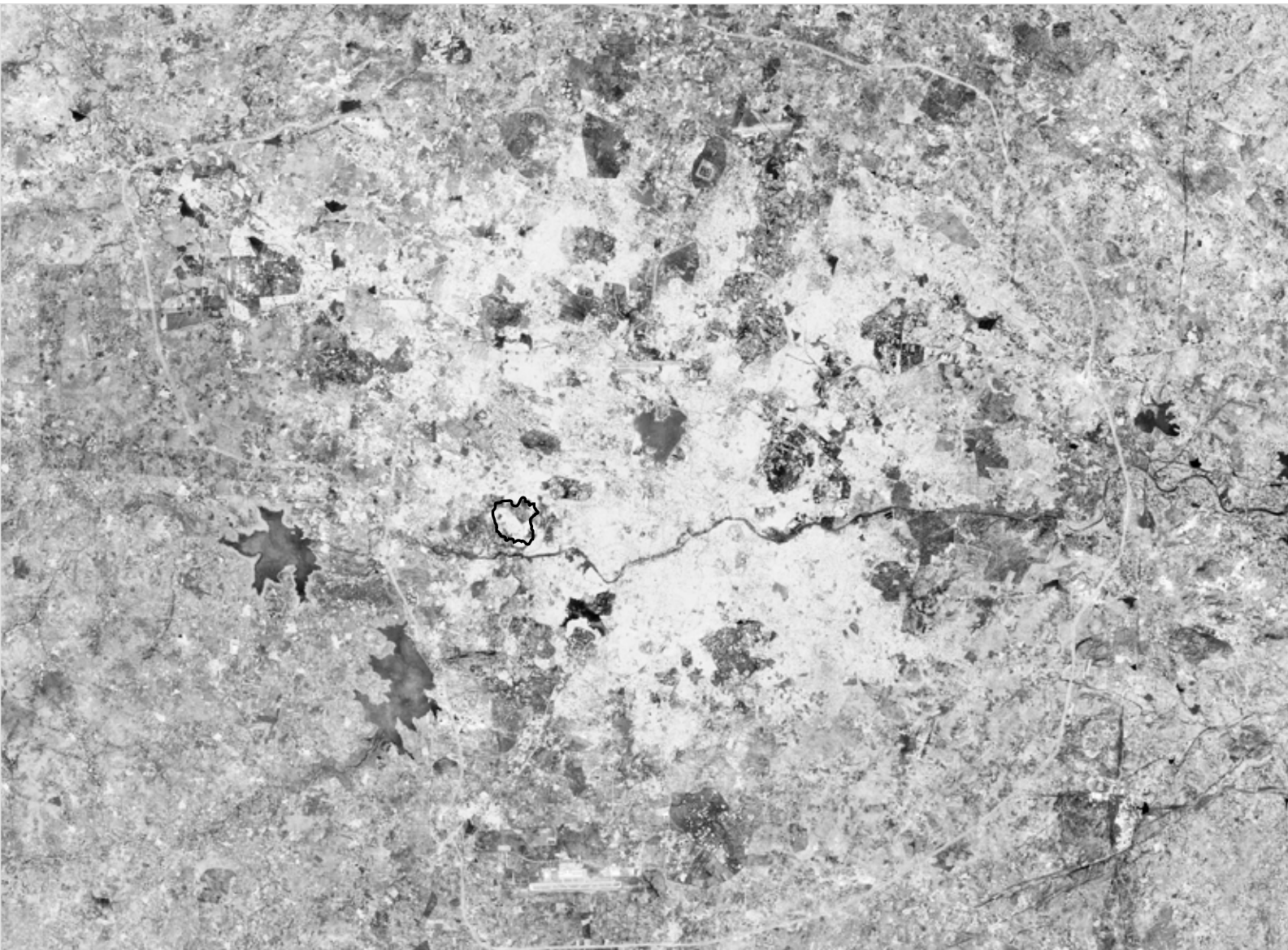
'Despite their closeness the men pay no attention to each other. They are isolated, identity and individuality lost. The repetition and the regimentation emphasize the ordinariness of their everyday existence and the boring routine of their working lives, which are without joy and companionship.'

Mike McKiernan. *Oxford Journals, Occupational Medicine, Vol. 64, Issue 2, Pg 76-77.* March 2014

Golconda that translates to 'shepherd's hill' is a 16th century walled city strategically built around a granite hill that rises 120m above sea level. Located on the deccan plateau the topography of the surrounding region is characterised by rocky outcrops of naturally occurring granite formations. Lying to the south-west and 20km from the centre of the present day city of Hyderabad, Golconda became one of its first historic urban centres. This medieval city that became synonymous with wealth and well known for its exuberance in its hey day, was the deccan capital of the Qutub Shahi rulers¹ that often found mention in the recordings of foreign travellers who were taken by its abundance. Marco Polo said this about the riches of the region when he visited Queen Rudrama Devi of Warangal in 1292 AD *"the flower of the diamonds and other large gems, as well as the largest pearls, are all carried to the great Kaan and other kings and princes of those regions. In truth they possess all the treasures of the world."*

¹The name deccan is an anglicised form of the prakrit word dakkhin, itself derived from the sanskrit word dāksina, as the deccan plateau is located in southern part of Indian subcontinent. The deccan plateau is a large plateau in India, making up most of the southern part of the country. It is very rich in minerals and precious stones. The erstwhile region of Golconda located on this plateau was known for the mines that have produced some of the world's most famous gems, including the Koh-i-Noor, the Hope Diamond and the Nassak Diamond. Source- [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deccan)

Below- Satellite image of the city of Hyderabad showing the location of Golconda for; its first urban settlement
Right- Image of the fort of Golconda. *Source- Wikipedia*
Below right- Structuring factors of the city of Hyderabad



2. Photograph of the Hussain Sagar lake in Hyderabad. Source- <http://www.giganticstatues.com/hussain-sagar/>
 3. Rendering of proposed development around the lake. Source- <http://www.thenewsminute.com/article/losing-hyderabad-high-rises-around-hussain-sagar-good-move>



The title of Rene Magritte's painting provides us fodder to reflect on the history of wealth in the city and question its continuing hold on the imagination of its people and governing bodies. Now in the 21st century there seems to be a renewed interest in wealth creation through private investment though with reduced interest in the public domain and cultural history of the city. This in a sense is in continuation with its historical identity with wealth sans its cultural legacy. New enclaves of wealth are being planned around the city without much attention to qualitatively improving the inner areas of the city which has led to indiscriminate and sporadic building activity on its peripheries that have no identity and have led to creation of 'notopias'. The Architectural Review coined the word 'notopia' and started a campaign under this name to discuss the future of global cities.

"If what is called the development of our cities is allowed to multiply at the present rate, then by the end of the century our world will consist of isolated oases of glassy monuments surrounded by a limbo of shacks and beige constructions, and we will be unable to distinguish any one global city from another. 'This pandemic of generic buildings have no connection to each other, let alone to the climate and culture of their location.'

With apologies to our forebear Ian Nairn, upon this scourge The Architectural Review bestows a name in the hope that it will stick – NOTOPLA. Its symptom (which one can observe without even leaving London) is that the edge of Mumbai will look like the beginning of Shenzhen, and the centre of Singapore will look like downtown Dallas.

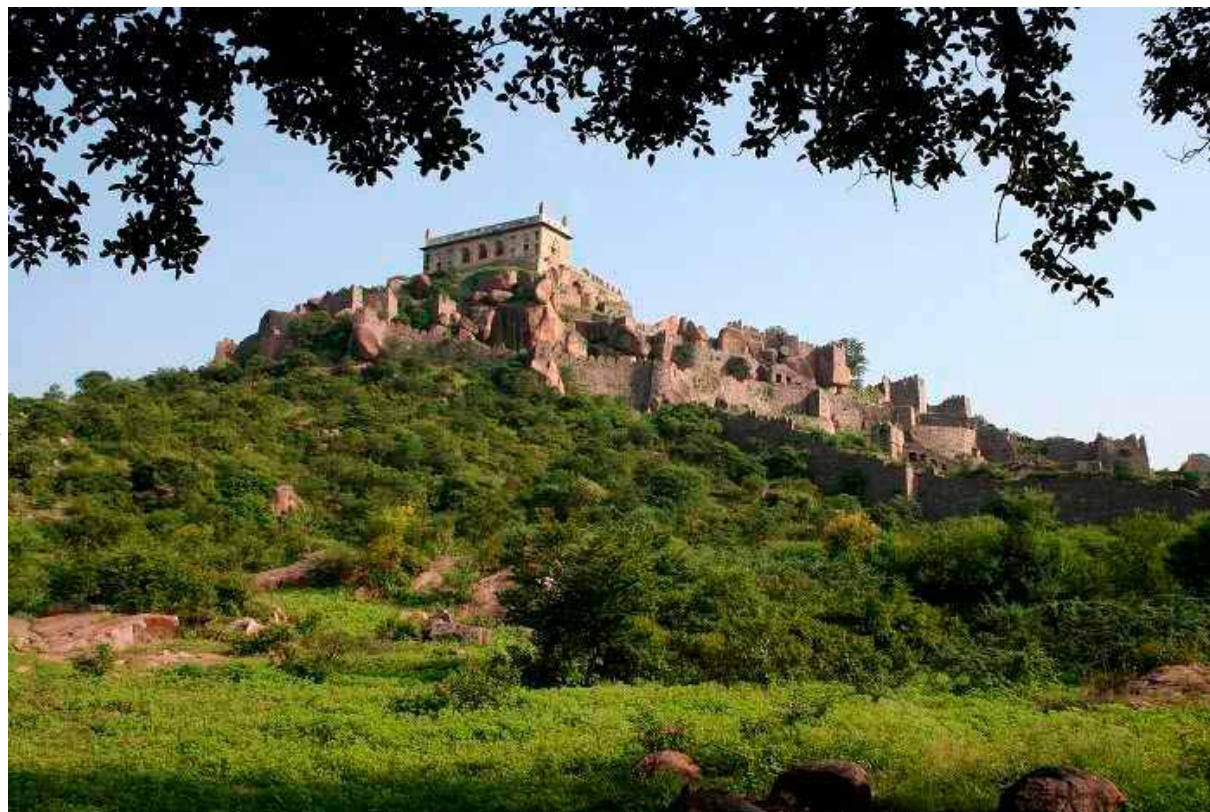
This thing of terror, which will wake you up sweating at night when you begin to realise its true proportions, consists in the universal creation of cities that are not human settlements, but places where capital investment lives in architecture devoid of social purpose. Notopia is where empty apartments and gated communities stand under guard while the homeless are not permitted even to sleep on the street, and are prodded or hosed down with water until they move on."

Editorial. *Architectural Review*. 2016

'The global city' syndrome becomes evident in recent statements made by government representatives of Telangana calling for skyscrapers to be built around a central degenerating lake to render a new economic identity for the city. The city has already witnessed such a banal transfer in the conception of its hi-tech enclave called 'Cyberabad'. There is thus an urgent need to save our cities from the homogenising dangers of wealth and investment in only profitable spaces and push for investment in building public spaces and buildings that are meant for a wider range of the population. The natural heterogeneity of free and democratic spaces should not be taken over by aspirations of the contemporary city to become manifestations of a profitable monotony.

1.2 Baradari Pavilion in the city

1. Photograph of the Bala Hissar Baradari of Golconda Fort. Source- <https://www.flickr.com/photos/anaxila/1479541307/>

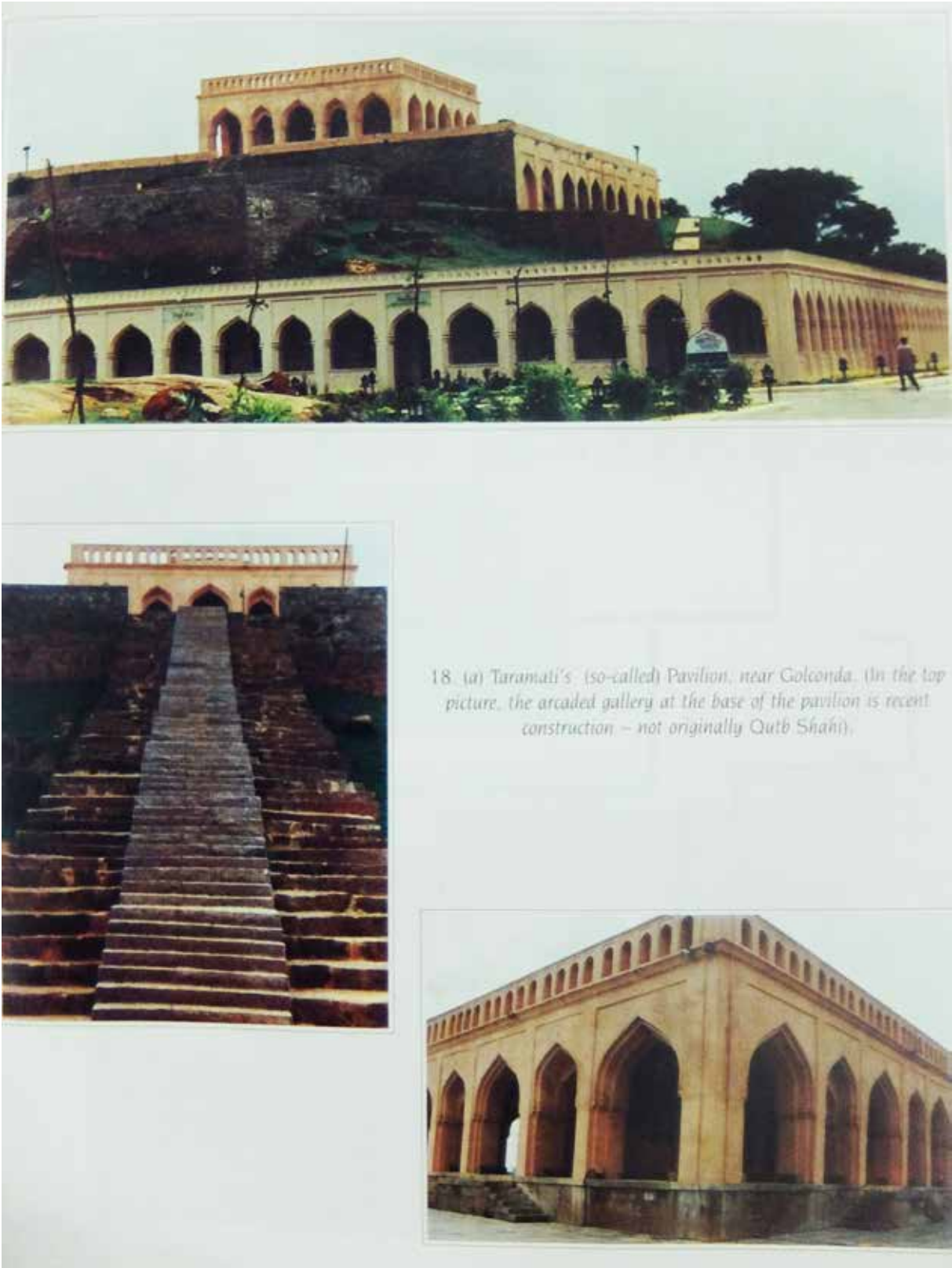
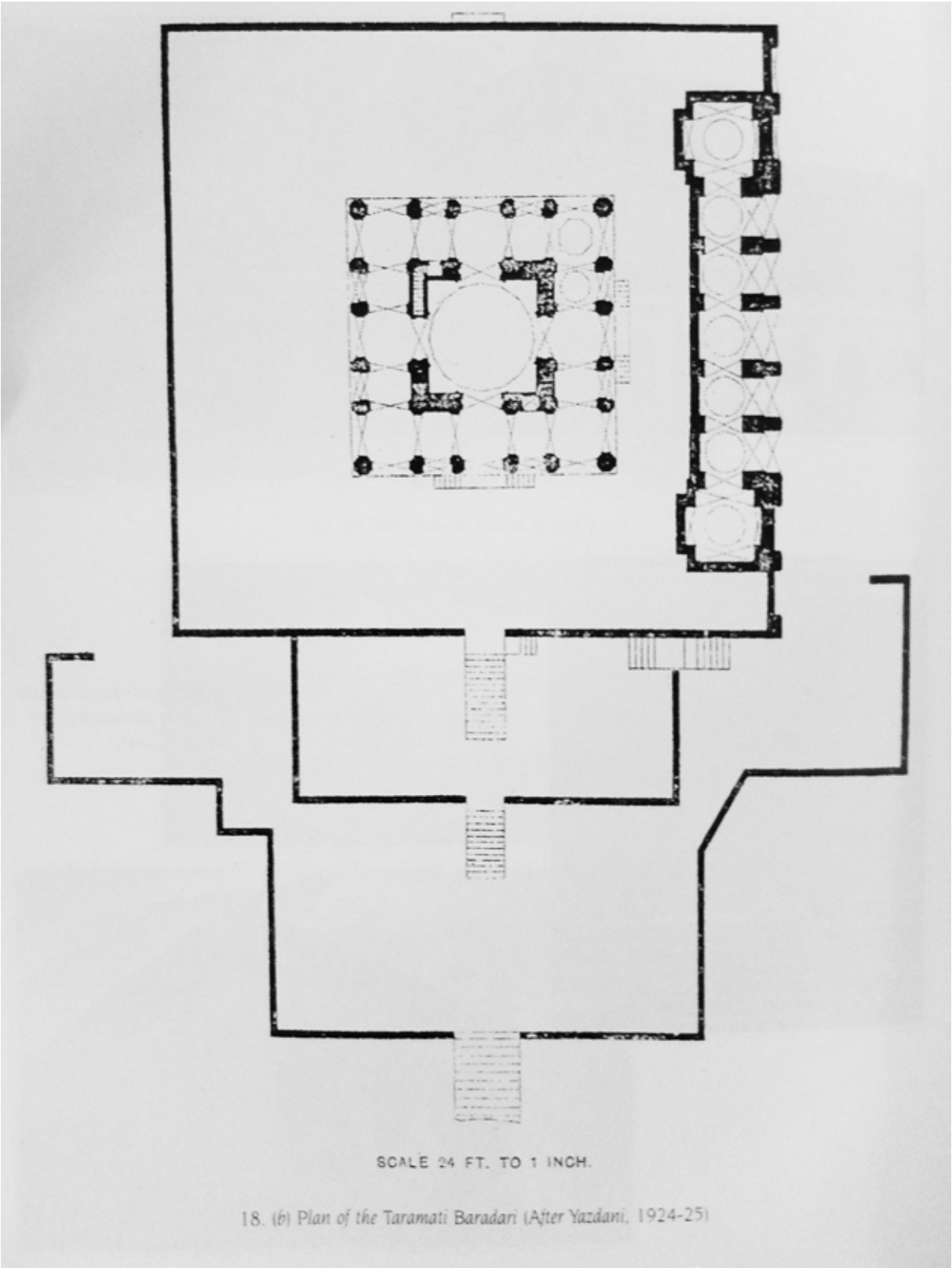


‘Bara-dari’ in Urdu translates to ‘twelve doors’. This building typology that was widely built in Hyderabad from the 16th to the 18th century and during the rule of the Qutub Shahi rulers were most often situated at elevated points in the city and were meant to be used as a space of respite from the hot weather. The region is characterised by its tropical wet and dry climate with hot summers and heavy monsoons. In such a climate these open pavilions perched on high altitudes served to experience the draft of cool breeze during hot summers and to enjoy the monsoons during the rainy seasons. Because of their excellent acoustic design they were also used as concert or dance halls by the royal family. Though most of the pavilions were built with the local granite stone, some of them when built within residential palace complexes were built with wood. The Bala Hissar Baradari and Taramati Baradari are some important examples of the former and Abul Hasan’s palace ‘Lakharkot’ and Raja Bhagwanda’s summer pavillion, though have not survived, are examples of the latter.

“Muhammad Quli, also built three large, pavilions. Of these two were on the top of hills, while the third one was Nadi Mahal, over looking the southern banks of the river. Near by this mahal was the Jinan Mahal. A vast pavilion was built on a hill and was named Naubat Ghar or Hill side park, and large cisterns and gates were added to it. Later it become Naubat Pabad. This garden was later extended right up to the river to form the Bagh - i - Dilkhusha and covered an area of about nine square miles. Another pavilion about two miles south of Charminar was built and named Koh-i-Tur. It formed symmetry with Naubat Ghat in the north. It had four large halls and a large platform of 30 yards by 20 yards, with a large tank at the rear, of size 45 yards by 30 yards.”

Dr. M. A. Nayeem. *The Heritage of the Qutb Shahis of Golconda in Hyderabad, Chp. 3, Architecture: Hyderabad, Pg 197.* Hyderabad, 2006

Below- Plan of the Taramati Baradari. Source- *The Heritage of the Qutb Shahis of Golconda in Hyderabad.*



1.3 Baghnagar City of Gardens



'Baghnagar' in Urdu translates to 'city of gardens'. According to Andrew Petersen, a scholar in Islamic architecture the new city that was founded on the southern banks of the Musi river, in 1591 AD, was first called 'Baghnagar' before assuming the name Hyderabad¹. This name finds earliest mention in the records of 17th century french traveller and gem merchant, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier who, while providing a detail account of the layout of these garden, expressed great surprise how the roof garden of Hina Mahal (17th century royal palace) should contain "trees of that bigness, that it is a thing of great wonder how these arches should bear so much large of a burden"² It is said that Muhammad Quli Qutub Shah (1580-1611 AD) , the ruler that founded the new city, undertook the construction of numerous buildings and palaces and built beautiful gardens in the city and its suburbs². The city was planned as a gridded layout at the junction of two important trade routes, one running east-west connecting the markets of Golconda, to the Machilipatnam port on the east coast of the Indian subcontinent and the second running in the north-south direction connecting the city to the lands across the river Musi. At the exact centre of this junction and city was built the char-minar (translates to 'four towers') and in its earliest form of conception a char-bagh (translates to 'four gardens') was planned to the northern side framed by the char-kaman (translates to 'four gateways'). Though the fountain, Gulzar Houz, placed at the centre of the char-bagh and the char-kaman have remained as per the original conception, the gardens were replaced by a shopping arcade called Patherghatti (translates to 'arcade of stone') in the early 20th century.

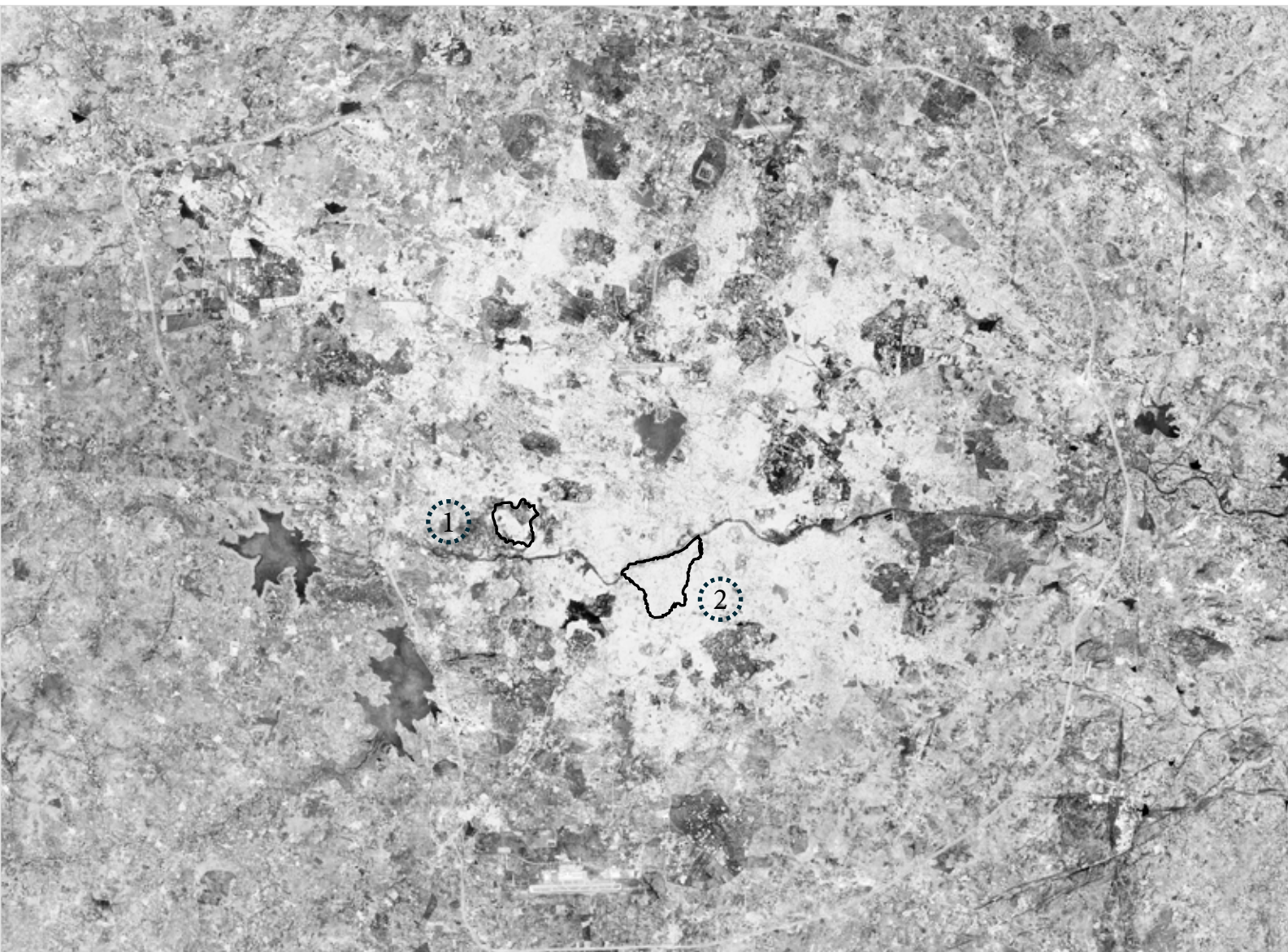
The char-bagh which is also sometimes called 'paradise garden' is structured into quadrants by pathways or waterways and is steeped in symbolism that 'has its very ancient roots in three of the world's great religions - Islam, Christianity and Buddhism.'³ Also known as the 'universal garden' because of its widespread usage between the 8th and 18th century, this iconic garden is believed to be a microcosm of the universe itself. This garden type has roots in the hot dry climate of Iran where the focus was on water for irrigation purposes.² Though the char-bagh was imported to India by different central asian conquering armies it was adapted to suit local conditions.

1 Petersen, Andrew (1996). Dictionary of Islamic architecture. Routledge. p. 112. ISBN 0-415-06084-2.

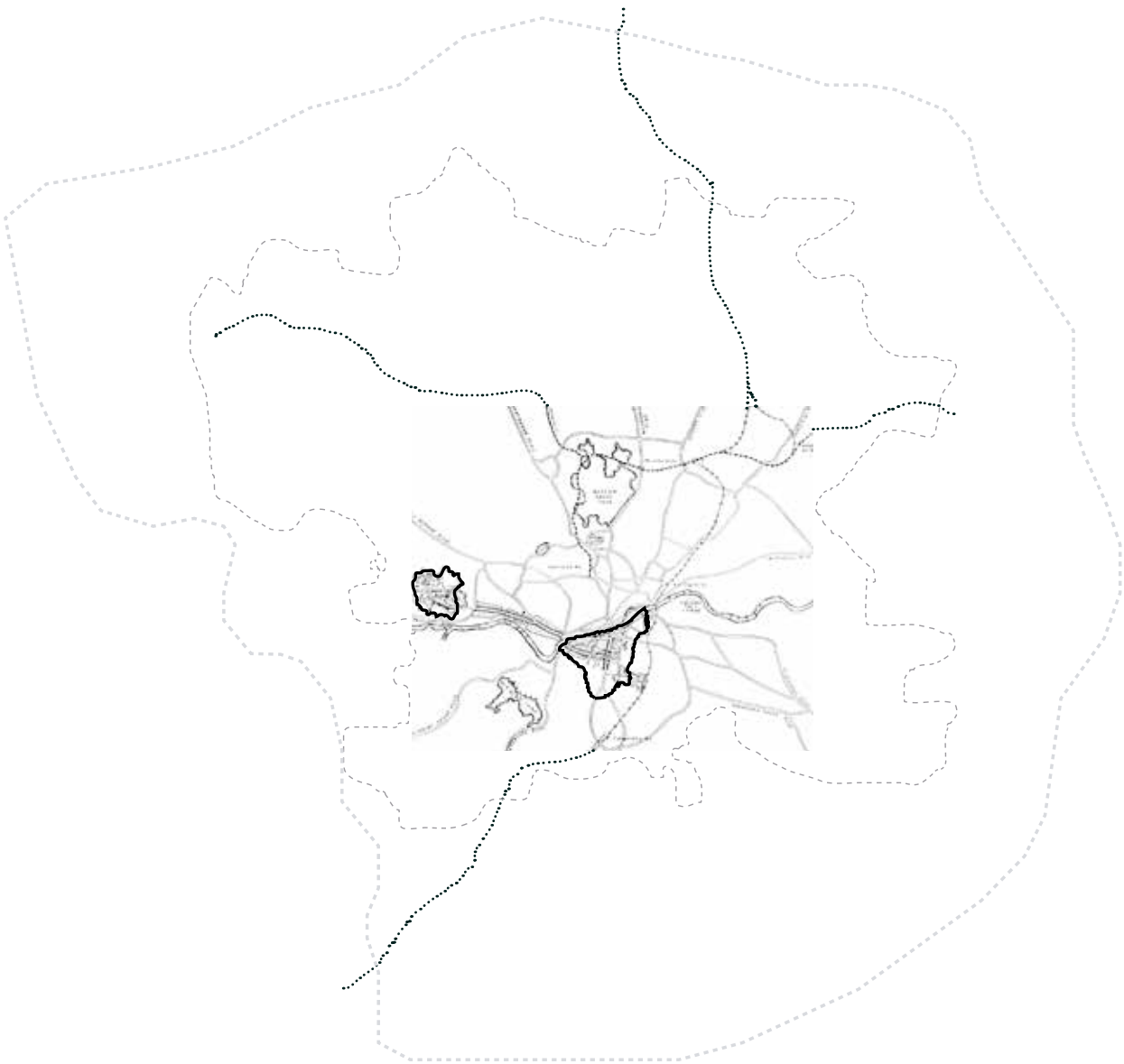
2 Source- *The Heritage of the Qutb Shahis of Golconda in Hyderabad*.

3 Source- <http://hamiltongardens.co.nz/collections/paradise-collection/indian-char-bagh-garden/>

Below- Satellite image of the city of Hyderabad indicating location of the 15th century Golconda fort (1) and the 16th century new walled city of Hyderabad(2)
Below right- Structuring factors of the city of Hyderabad



True to its erstwhile name the city in its present state continues to have many green spaces in the form of gardens and parks most of which are preserved historic spaces and some developed in the past 20 years with the idea of creating ecological repositories within the city. The problem with most of these spaces are that they are not truly public and inclusive in the sense that their entry is strictly controlled, guarded with boundary walls and subjected to an entrance fee because of the fear of encroachments and anti social activities. Thus they have become isolated and enclosed green islands that do not really belong to the city. Hence there is an urgent need to think of new types of green spaces that are open and yet controlled through social activity along their edge or spaces that enhance the permeability of the city and thus are constantly activated through movement instead of being static repositories of green.



1.4 In the Bazaars of Hyderabad

City of Markets

1. Image of street hawkers selling wares along one of the roads radiating from the Charminar.
Source- http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-C55giuOc184/UEOAQzwFjMI/AAAAAAAAABBY/Xqrz14YA9Lc/s1600/IMG_4169.JPG



The successful planning and implementation of the new civic capital led to the shifting of most administrative, intellectual, cultural and commercial activities from the fortress of Golconda to the expanding urban centre on the southern banks of river Musi. The markets that lined the streets of the erstwhile fortified settlement soon began to shift to Hyderabad and this new city became a bustling centre of commerce with growing importance not only regionally but also internationally. The city was already well versed with the idea of ‘free markets’ as no restrictions were imposed on anyone to buy or sell goods.

“Hyderabad became within a short period of its creation, the commercial metropolis of the kingdom of Golconda and Tavernier found local merchants transacting with foreign traders Monsieur de Thevenot. who visited Hyderabad in 1669, was surprised to see in this city a large number of rich merchants, banks, jewellers and skilful artisans, not only native but also Persian and Armenian. Abbe Carre, who visited in 1672-74, observes that Hyderabad was full of strangers and merchants and that trade was carried on by foreigners and others without any restrictions about nationality or business. He continues that there was such a concourse of every kind of people, merchandise and riches that the places seems to be the centre of all trade in the East.”

Dr. M. A. Nayeem. *The Heritage of the Qutb Shahis of Golconda in Hyderabad, Chp. 1, Evolution, Rise and Fall of the Qutb Shahi Kingdom, Pg 15.* Hyderabad, 2006

In medieval cities, ruled by Persians, ‘bazaars’ most often formed the economic foundation and were an important structuring factor in their urban growth. ‘Bazaars’ were market streets or places which were nerve centres of commerce and meant as platforms for commoners to do their business. These subsequently evolved as important public spaces in the city so much so that the ‘char-bagh’ that was envisaged on the northern side of Charminar was soon replaced by ‘pather-ghati’. In the 1920s the City Improvement board that was set up by the Nizam developed the Patherghati- a 0.5 km long stone arcaded bazaar in front of Charminar. This along with the Charminar have evolved as the central spine of the old city of Hyderabad.

1912 poem written by Sarojini Naidu (also known as the 'Nightingale of India'), London

*What do you sell, O ye merchants?
Richly your wares are displayed.
Turbans of crimson and silver,
Tunics of purple brocade,
Mirrors with panels of amber,
Daggers with handles of jade.
What do you weigh, O ye vendors?
Saffron, lentil and rice.
What do you grind, O ye maidens?
Sandalwood, henna and spice.
What do you call, O ye pedlars?
Chessmen and ivory dice.
What do you make, O ye goldsmiths?
Wristlet and anklet and ring,
Bells for the feet of blue pigeons,
Frail as a dragon-fly's wing,
Girdles of gold for the dancers,
Scabbards of gold for the king.
What do you cry, O fruitmen?
Citron, pomegranate and plum.
What do you play, O ye musicians?
Sitar, Sarangi and drum.
What do you chant, O magicians?
Spells for the aeons to come.
What do you weave, O ye flower-girls?
With tassels of azure and red?
Crowns for the brow of a bridegroom,
Chaplets to garland his bed,
Sheets of white blossoms new-garnered
To perfume the sleep of the dead.*

"The Pathargatti Bazaar scheme widened the road to 95 feet, which included covered footpaths on both sides of the road. A difficult project, it took several decades to build, starting from the 1920s and ranging to the early 1940s. The Pathargatti Bazaar project vastly improved the cityscape of the time, although it soon became overcrowded and its original design badly disfigured by the deluge of hawkers and stalls caused by the population expansion."

Omar Khalidi. *A Guide to Architecture in Hyderabad, Deccan, India*. Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2009

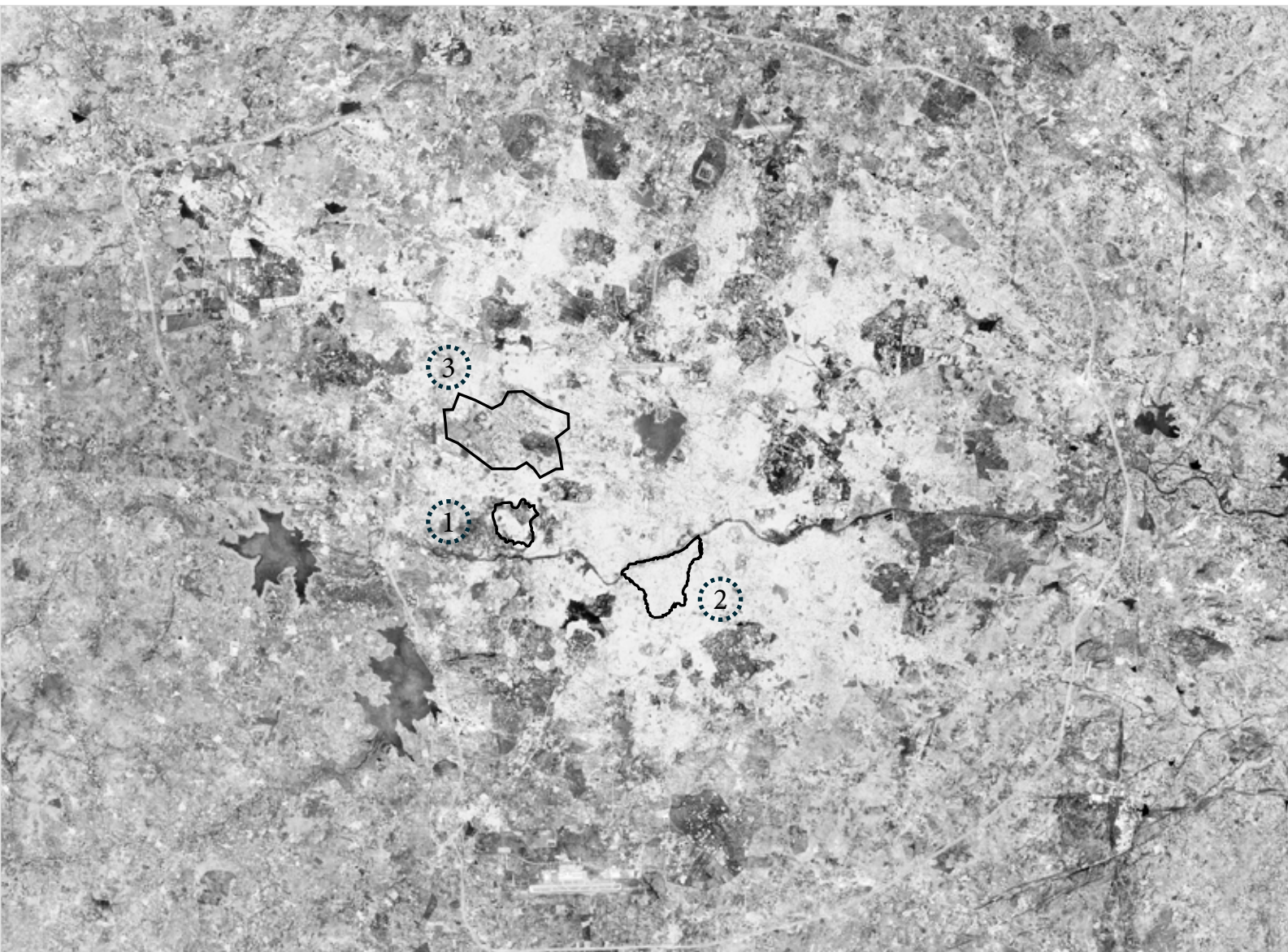
In the early 20th century, poet and freedom fighter Sarojini Devi penned the beautifully articulated poem 'In the Bazaars of Hyderabad'. What becomes apparent in the poem is the diversity of wares sold at the market and the range of people they cater to cutting across economic and religious barriers. It is symbolic of the diversity that is synonymous with the city and the country. The poem's intention could be interpreted as an emphasis on diversity as the strength of the country and unifying its people against an imposed westernisation that threatened to homogenize a historical cultural heterogeneity. This poem is often interpreted in the light of the then popular 'Swadeshi movement' that was propagated by freedom fighters as an instrument for self governance. One of its principle strategies was the boycott of British imported products and revival of domestic and locally made produce. Though in contradiction to the original concept of 'free markets' this interpretation of the bazaars was to temper down the aggressive monopoly of foreign machine made products that were slowly replacing vernacular man made produce.

Though air conditioned shopping malls and global brands are fast flooding 21st century Hyderabad, the city is still identified and famous for its local bazaars and markets that sell local produce. The call for 'Swadeshi' in recent years has re-surfaced albeit differently under the present government of India. Campaigns like 'Make in India' are shifting the emphasis of the country's economy on self-sustenance and to encourage national and international companies to produce in India. It is hoped that this will generate jobs as well as assist in skill building of the local populace. This is also reflected in concepts like the 'Farmer's Markets' that are organised weekly and help provide a platform for farmers to directly sell their produce to people in cities without having to lose money to middle-men. Recently the state government of Telangana announced that it would invest in constructing 200 model markets in different parts of the city towards re-asserting the importance of local markets in the city.

".....with a budget of Rs 130 crore, the corporation will construct over 200 model markets costing Rs 60 lakh each.....Each circle will have 10 markets of 200 to 500 sq. yd. The market complexes will be of two floors with the ground floor for vegetables and eatables, pharmacies, ATMs and other provisions. The second floor would be for meats, groceries and dry food. The GHMC currently has only 30 markets in the city catering to a population of around one crore. Officials said that there should be at least one model market for every 10,000 people."

Newspaper article published in Deccan Chronicle. *Model market construction begins in Hyderabad*, Hyderabad, Oct 14, 2015.

Below- Satellite image of the city of Hyderabad indicating location of the 15th century Golconda fort (1), the 16th century new walled city of Hyderabad(2) and the 20th century knowledge enclave of Cyberabad (3)



1.5 Cyberabad

The urbanal city

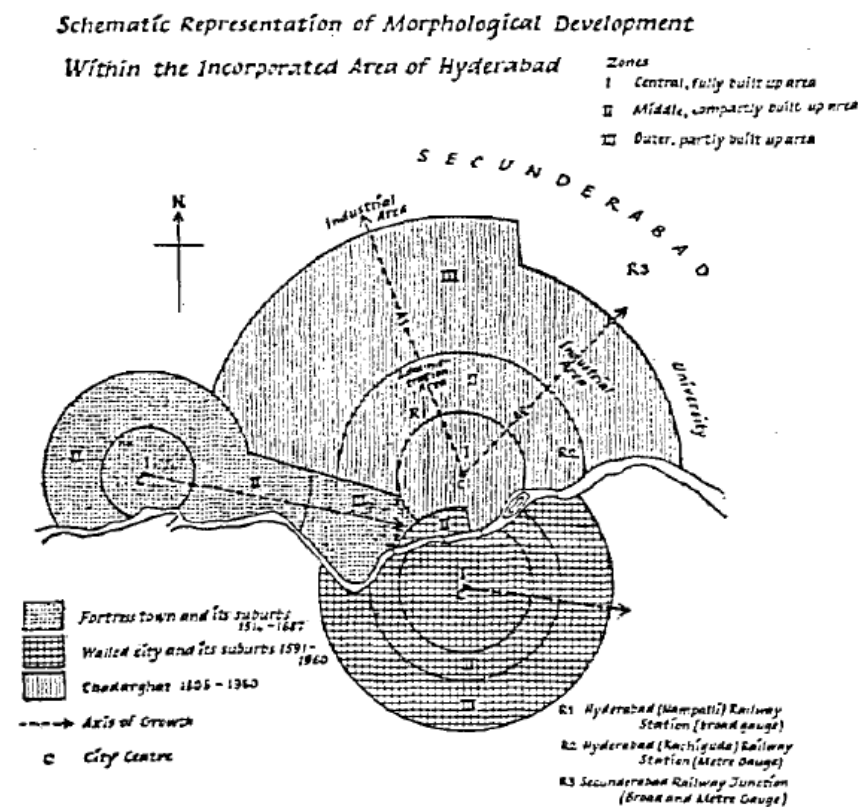
In the 1980s India started branding itself as an important international software development zone. Many of India’s state governments saw this as an opportunity to facilitate economic growth and started selling land for subsidised rates to software companies in the USA. Thus urban areas like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi National Capital Region, Mumbai, Chennai emerged as software development centres. The back offices of most software companies in the Silicon valley, USA now operate out of Indian cities. Rapid increase in software development units brought with them a large employment base for the educated section of society. The burgeoning middle class, caused largely by the economic liberalisation since 1991, includes a large proportion of highly skilled IT professionals working in high-tech spaces in and around major urban centres which are rapidly expanding (*Mukherjee 2008*)

High-tech enclaves also called knowledge parks started emerging as an important urban development initiative in major Indian cities in the 1990s. They have developed as conglomeration of office spaces that cater exclusively to information and knowledge based industries. High-tech enclaves are often promoted as the engines of growth for Indian cities in the 21st century. (GoAP 1999). Cyberabad, one such high-tech enclave, developed under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu, on the western fringe of Hyderabad. The city was re-branded from being a historic one to a hub of information technology.¹

The need to implement this vision on a fast track basis saw 17 villages in the western part of the city transform itself into urbanised areas which subsequently led to dispalcement of local farmers who lost their means of livelihood to land acquisitions. A master-plan for the 52km2 of land thus acquired was prepared and the region fell under the statutory authority, Cyberabad Development Authority. (CDA). The state focussed all its attention on developing this region as an exemplary centre and model for other urban areas in the country of a better quality of living and working standards (GoAP 2001). Through a majority of private investments in real estate ‘world class’

¹ Diganta Das., *Transforming Asian Cities: Intellectual impasse, Asianizing space, and emerging translocalities*, Chp 7, Pg 112-115, *Ordinary Lives in Extraordinary Cyberabad*. Edited by Nihal Perera, Wing-Shing Tang. Routledge, Nov 12, 2012

Below- Graphic Representation of the growth of Hyderabad's many urban centres. Source- Shah Manzoor Alam. *Hyderabad-Secunderabad, Twin Cities: A Study in Urban Geography*, Allied Publishers, Secunderabad (India)1965



housing, commercial and recreational facilities were developed for the rich and the elite while the rest of the city suffered negligence. Besides local road infrastructure the masterplan also proposed connecting the enclave to a new international airport through an ultra modern expressway thus rendering it truly 'global'.

"However the aspiration of modern infrastructure installations and Cyberabad's exclusive connection to global cities also pointed to the splintering of the urban landscape where high-tech enclaves become connected to other global cities but without much connection to its local surroundings (Graham and Marvin 2001). While modern premium infrastructures were proposed for the Cyberabad region, other parts of the city struggled to develop basic infrastructure, such as roads, power and water (Ramchandraiah 2007, 2008; Rao 2007; Ramchandraiah and Prasad 2008)."
 Diganta Das. *Transforming Asian Cities: Intellectual impasse, Asianizing space, and emerging translocalities*, Chp 7, Pg 115, *Ordinary Lives in Extraordinary Cyberabad*. Edited by Nihal Perera, Wing-Shing Tang. Routledge, Nov 12, 2012

This tendency of neglecting old urban centres while aggressively focussing on new centres of growth is a historical problem in Hyderabad. Shah Manzoor Alam in his 1965 publication *'Urban Geography of Hyderabad and Secunderabad'* wrote: *"It is thus clear that the city within its boundaries includes three distinct urban units represented by the ruined fortress of Golconda, the decaying Walled City and the dynamic Chaderghat which until 1931 was a separate municipality. These three urban centres were the products of different political, cultural and economic systems, and thus were separate in foundation and emotional associations. As a result the never did not fuse into the older, but maintained its discrete identity through the creation of new cultural and economic activities. This naturally caused the decline of the older settlements and accounts for the ruin of Golconda."*

These trends have been further accentuated since the formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1956 for the crowded Walled City offers no attraction to the enterprising immigrants from Andhra who are more interested in developing the modern commercial core in the north and also in the vacant lands in that same section of the city for residential use. These immigrants have no cultural and emotional ties with the southern part of the city, 'which for them is a relic of decadent feudalism, the very antithesis of progressive trends which they represent. These breaks in emotional ties and cultural links have created tension between the older settlements and they are pulling apart. The older, being thus isolated from the forces of growth and expansion, is hardening against change, its population is clinging fast to outmoded traditions and economic systems which might lead to its decay and ultimate ruin. Thus not all parts of Hyderabad are vitally active."

Further, the author states that unlike West European cities, where the historic core is very much a part of the growing metropolis, Hyderabad is a conglomeration of many urban centres because of lack of continuity of cultural association and emotional integration and the super-imposition of the present upon the past that European cities seem to manifest. To detract from this trend would mean to shift focus back on the older urban centres in the city and consciously think of spatial strategies to fuse the city in terms of 'identity and continuity'.

Images showing the Outer Ring Road on the city's periphery and the construction of the Hyderabad Metro in the interior of the city.

1. Source- http://i1087.photobucket.com/albums/j464/Carzzz12/DSCN0717-Copy_zpsaf789cb5.jpg

2. Source- http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/multimedia/dynamic/02434/BL10_PG5_HYD-METRO_2434324f.jpg



1.6

Hyderabad metro and the outer ring road project

Urban infrastructure and the changing cityscape

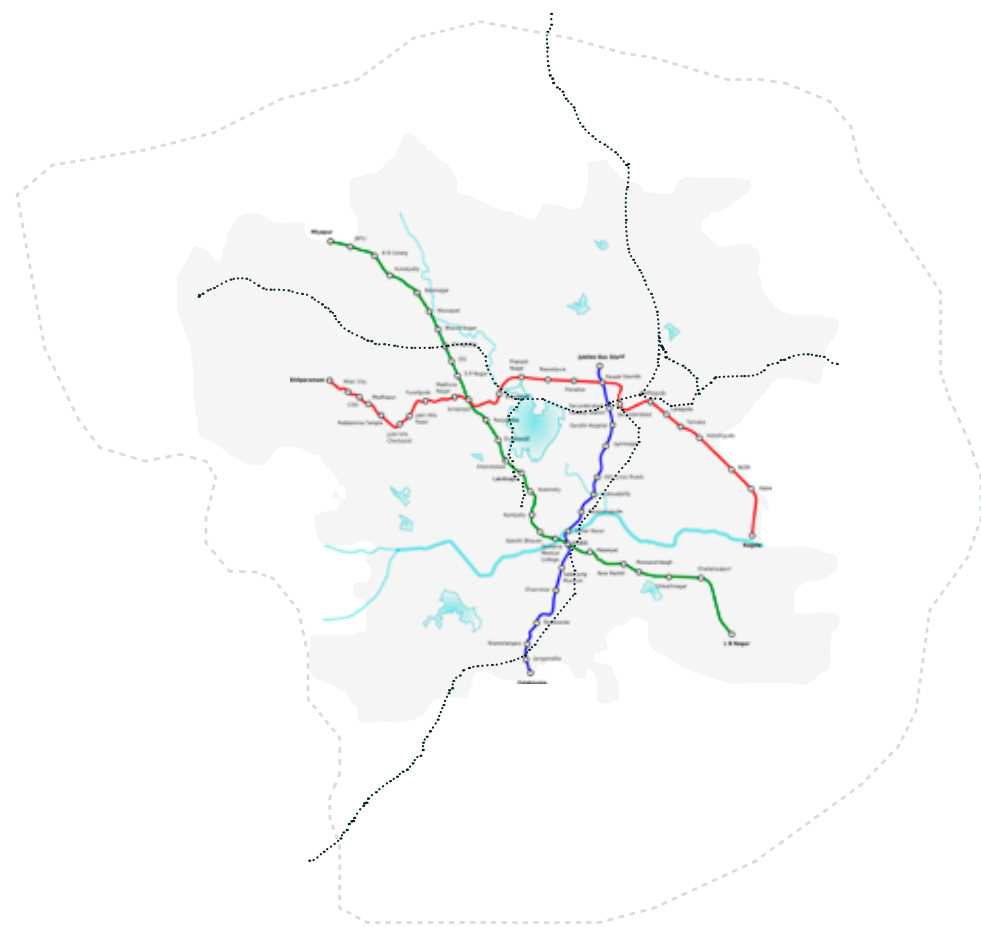
The Hyderabad metro and the outer ring road are ongoing infrastructural projects in the city meant to improve connectivity within the growing metropolis. These urban infrastructural projects are changing the cityscape in terms of their scale and planning while being callous about the existing city fabric and natural landscape.

The outer ring road, is an eight lane, 158km expressway, circling the city of Hyderabad. Not only does this road connect fast developing urban nodes, it is also proposed to have a 1km growth corridor on either side. This though seems beneficial in terms of providing more work, housing and service spaces to the increasing population of the city, will subsequently lead to excessive building activity on the city's periphery with no qualitative improvement in the city's interior areas. Focusing on the city's inner areas will mean looking at mixed use, high density development. New workplaces in the city's interior could mean reducing the commute to the city's periphery where most of the work enclaves are currently being shifted to. But before increasing density within the city what is absolutely crucial is qualitatively improving the urban centre with public spaces that connect better with the city and its built environment and is well integrated into the city's pedestrian and vehicular movement network.

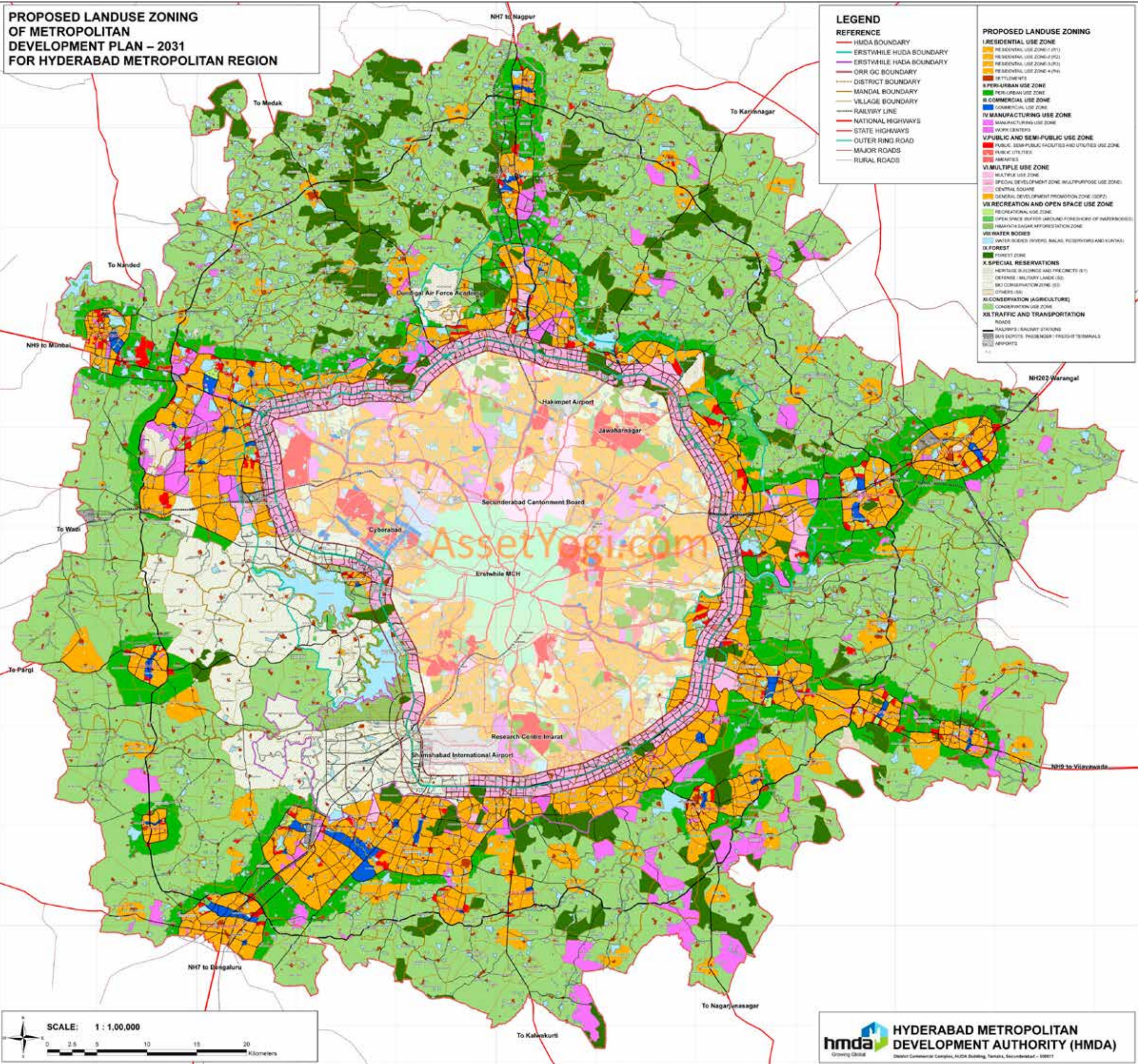
"Within a decade, we can foresee the ORR-GC (Outer Ring Road Growth Corridor) and GHMC, covered by multi-storeyed buildings. Because of multi-storeyed buildings (building mass), the heat observed during the day will be released in the night leading to heat trap.....And because the leeward side (North-East) of the Greater Hyderabad is closed or obstructed by the intensity of multi-storeyed buildings, the difference between the maximum and minimum temperatures in a day will be reduced by 20C and above. It is unimaginable to predict the future of the city if the global temperature rises as predicted by some eco scientists. As the airflow is obstructed in multi-storeyed buildings, pollution levels will be increased in GHMC area. Whereas the trend throughout the world is to have a zero carbon city in future, we are proposing the city into 100 per cent carbon city. Because of the heat trap, the eco system in the inner area covered by the ring city will be seriously affected."

A.B. Reddy, Anoosha Balmoori. *Moving towards 100 per cent carbon city* . Newspaper Article featured in *The Hindu*, Sep 2, 2012

Below- Graphic Representation of the existing urban spread of Hyderabad city, important water bodies, rail infrastructure and proposed metro corridors.
 Right- Metropolitan Development Plan 20



Similarly, though the Hyderabad metro greatly helps to facilitate movement and public transportation within the city it fails to connect with the city's interior residential pockets. What is then required is a pedestrian and bus network plan that improves last mile ground connectivity. Without this strategy the metro will not work efficiently or reduce private vehicular congestion as has been often claimed.

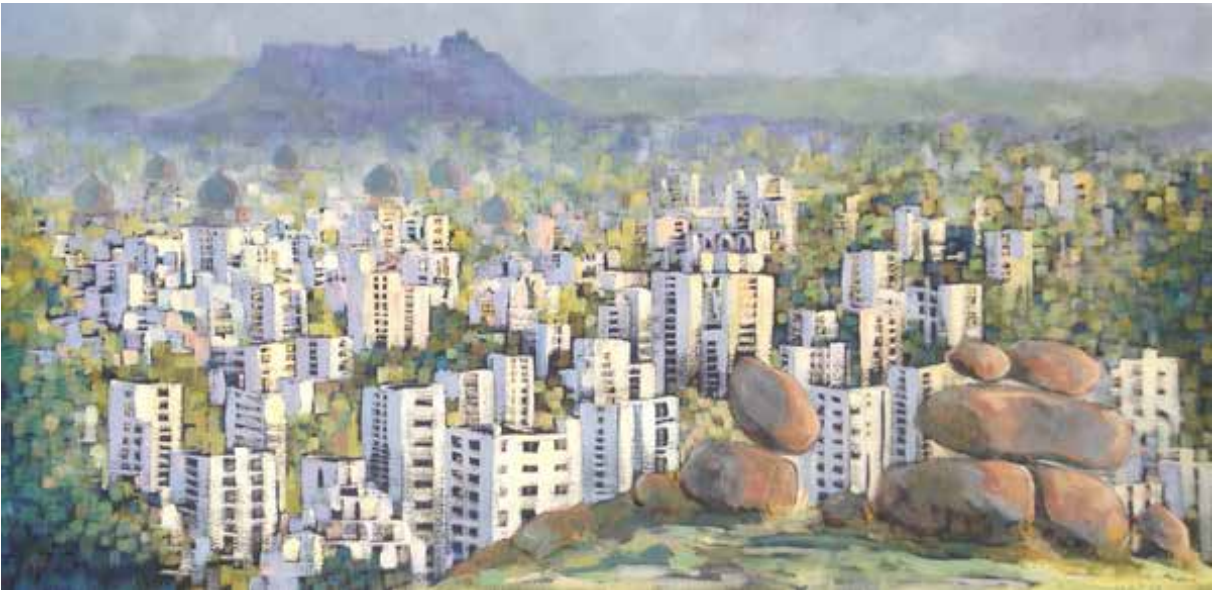


1.7

Save the rocks and lakes

Landscape of the city

Below- Painting by artist Karen Rempel showing the Golconda fort in the background of a growing Notopia.
Source- http://photos2.meetupstatic.com/photos/event/6/3/b/2/600_269065522.jpeg



Located on the deccan plateau region of the southern peninsula of India, the virgin landscape of Hyderabad was dominated by granite hillocks, water streams that drained these hillocks and naturally occurring catchment lakes and water bodies. The granite rocks of the deccan plateau are amongst the oldest in the world and geologists date these rocks 2500 million years back. To prevent the indiscriminate destruction of this natural, historical, and environmental heritage, a group of artists, photographers and environmentalists from Hyderabad has been working for the protection of the rocky landscape since 1992.¹ With rapid urbanisation and flattening of land for infrastructure projects in the past three to four decades the city’s natural landscape has taken a beating. This is also true for the city’s waterscape. Hyderabad was once known as the city of lakes but due to infills and building over catchment areas have resulted in a drastic shift in drainage patterns. The flooding of the city in the 2016 monsoon is testimony to the adverse effects of rapid urbanization at the expense of environmental stability.

Rocks and lakes, have been part of the cityscape since the times of Qutb Shabi and Asif Jabi rulers. “The Qutb Shabi rulers built lakes using the natural heights and hollows to trap rain water and the Asif Jabis strengthened this system further. Even if we are not saving rocks as responsible citizens, we should save them for our own selfish reasons — to lead a better quality of life.”

Anuradha Reddy, environmentalist and convener, INTACH, Hyderabad chapter. Reported by Sangeetha Devi Dundoo. *Newspaper article- ‘On the Rocks’*, *The Hindu*. 2 June 2010, Hyderabad.

Despite the fact that non-governmental environmental organisations like SOUL (Save Our Urban Lakes) and The Society to Save Rocks are consistent in their efforts to raise awareness about the importance of conserving these natural features within our cities it is important to make mandatory, through building bye laws and planning policies, intelligent regulations to effectively conserve and restore the importance of the city’s naturally occurring geographical features as they are not only important ecologically but are also important identity markers for the city. But this has to be on the basis of a balanced approach between conservation and development.

¹ Source- <http://www.saverocks.org/TheSociety.html>

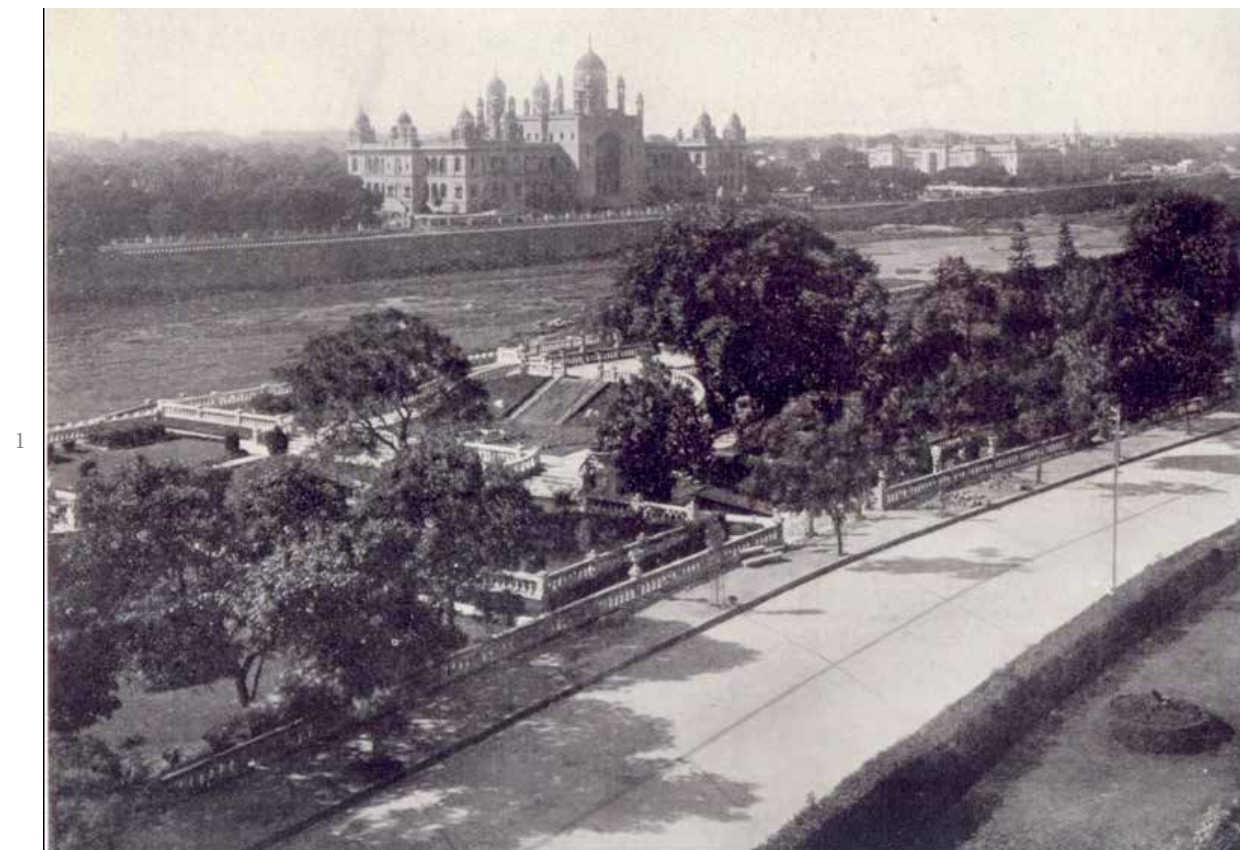
Below- Archival image of the erstwhile landscape of Hyderabad. © Lois Safrani, Courtesy of the Dome, MIT Library's Digital Collection, 1991. Link- <http://dome.mit.edu/handle/1721.3/20093>

Hyderabad based architect and urban designer Arshiya Syed in her blog² writes: *“The case is not against urban development as it is the only way forward for cities. An objective approach is required that can address the issues of development and urban ecology together. It is necessary to respond to the needs of the city and also the need of the existing natural heritage.”*

² <https://theurbanote.wordpress.com/tag/architecture/>



1. Archival image of the promenade along the Musi planned after the 1908 floods.
2. Present day image of the promenade along the Musi. Self.



1.8 Development vs Conservation Conundrum

City of Contradictions

In late 2015, a suggestion by the Chief Minister of Telangana to demolish the heritage building of Osmania General hospital, deeply disturbed old timers and heritage activists in the city. His concern was over the dilapidated condition of the building and being a hospital deemed even more inappropriate to continue housing patients. The government suggested constructing a contemporary building in its place on the banks of the river Musi. This led to written and staged protests from concerned citizens and professionals alike who thought it a rather insensitive thought to erase a building considered an important landmark in the urban and architectural history of the city.

Osmania General Hospital was designed by British architect Vincent Jerome Esch and completed by 1919 A.D under the rule of Osman Ali Khan, the 7th Nizam of Hyderabad in Indo-Saracenic style. The building was noteworthy not only for its style which tried to blend modern planning with local aesthetic sensibilities but also in terms of introducing a new building typology in the city. The construction of public buildings like the Osmania General Hospital and subsequent modernization of the walled city began as an aftermath of the Musi floods of 1908. It caused many deaths and loss of property. Thus began a series of public projects that were meant to de-congest the city and also provide better sanitary conditions for its inhabitants. The Nizam formed the City Improvement Board in 1911 to look into the planning and implementation of these public projects. The Musi Riverfront development that involved the construction of flood embankments, laying out of parks and open grounds for recreations, boulevards and the construction of important public buildings along the embankment was the most important urban initiative taken up by the organization.

The construction of the Osmania General Hospital was also a part of this important initiative and thus calling for its demolition is the latest of many instances of cold apathy towards the city's heritage in the past 50 odd years in the name of development. This emotional apathy can also be attributed to the fact that most of the original inhabitants of the city moved out after the princely state of Hyderabad was forcefully annexed to the Indian union in 1948 A.D.

3. Photograph showing the outer ring road cutting through the existing rock formations.
Source- http://www.thehindu.com/multimedia/dynamic/00120/HYM03ROCK2_120527f.jpg

4. Photograph showing increasing urban activity in the city's western periphery.
Souce- https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/38/Hyderabad_Financial_district%2CIndia.jpg



This emotional disconnect continues into the 21st century as the city now witnesses a huge floating population of young migrants who work in the city's software hub located on its north western periphery. Similarly the city's natural heritage of granite rocks and boulders are being ruthlessly destroyed thanks to rampant urban infrastructural work like the Hyderabad Metro and the Outer Ring Road project. This has brought to surface deep seated contradictions between the hasty economic aspirations of the city's people and the need for qualitative and holistic development of the city. This penchant for development is best encapsulated in Anand Giridhardas's essay titled 'In Search of the Indian Dream' in which he writes *"It is dream of becoming yourself, free of history and judgment and guilt"*

Development on the city's peripheries have been rampant in the past three decades whereas the inner city areas are in a deteriorating state. Proposals like the Musi Riverfront Development and skyscrapers around Hussain Sagar Lake though rely heavily on increasing private investments along these waterbodies, do not suggest much in terms of conserving the ecological, historical and cultural domain. Thus the development vs conservation conundrum is most apparent in these inner city areas. While talking about a way forward in his essay title 'Point of Balance' Architect Charles Correa wrote *"If there are two alternate ways to achieve a goal, of course we should choose the one that is more resource efficient and more gentle on the environment. But we must understand that almost all development involves a certain exploitation of resources, just as conservations implies the reverse. So what we need to do is not just maximise one extreme or the other, but find the point of optimal balance between the two, i.e, that point of trade-off where both objectives are optimized"*



2 **The Urban Project**

Waterfront Development for the city and its people

2.1 Hussain Sagar Lakefront

Connecting the city to its heart

1. Archival Photograph of Hussain Sagar lake © Raja Deen Dayal, Courtesy of the Curzon Collection: 'Views of HH the Nizam's Dominions, Hyderabad, Deccan, 1892'
2. Archival Photograph of Hussain Sagar lake © Arjun Mangaldas, Courtesy of the Aga Khan Visual Archive, M.I.T. 1986



Hussain Sagar is a heart shaped urban lake in Hyderabad built in 1563 by Hazrat Hussain Shah Wali, under the rule of Ibrahim Quli Qutub Shah, the fifth Qutub Shahi king. Built on one of the tributaries of the river Musi, the lake was the main source of water supply to Hyderabad before Himayat Sagar and Osman Sagar were built on river Musi. Currently spread over 5.7 square kilometres and with a maximum depth of 32 feet the lake that till the 18th century was outside the urban limits of the city of Hyderabad soon found itself at its centre with the development of urban areas like Secunderabad, Banjara Hills and Cyberabad.

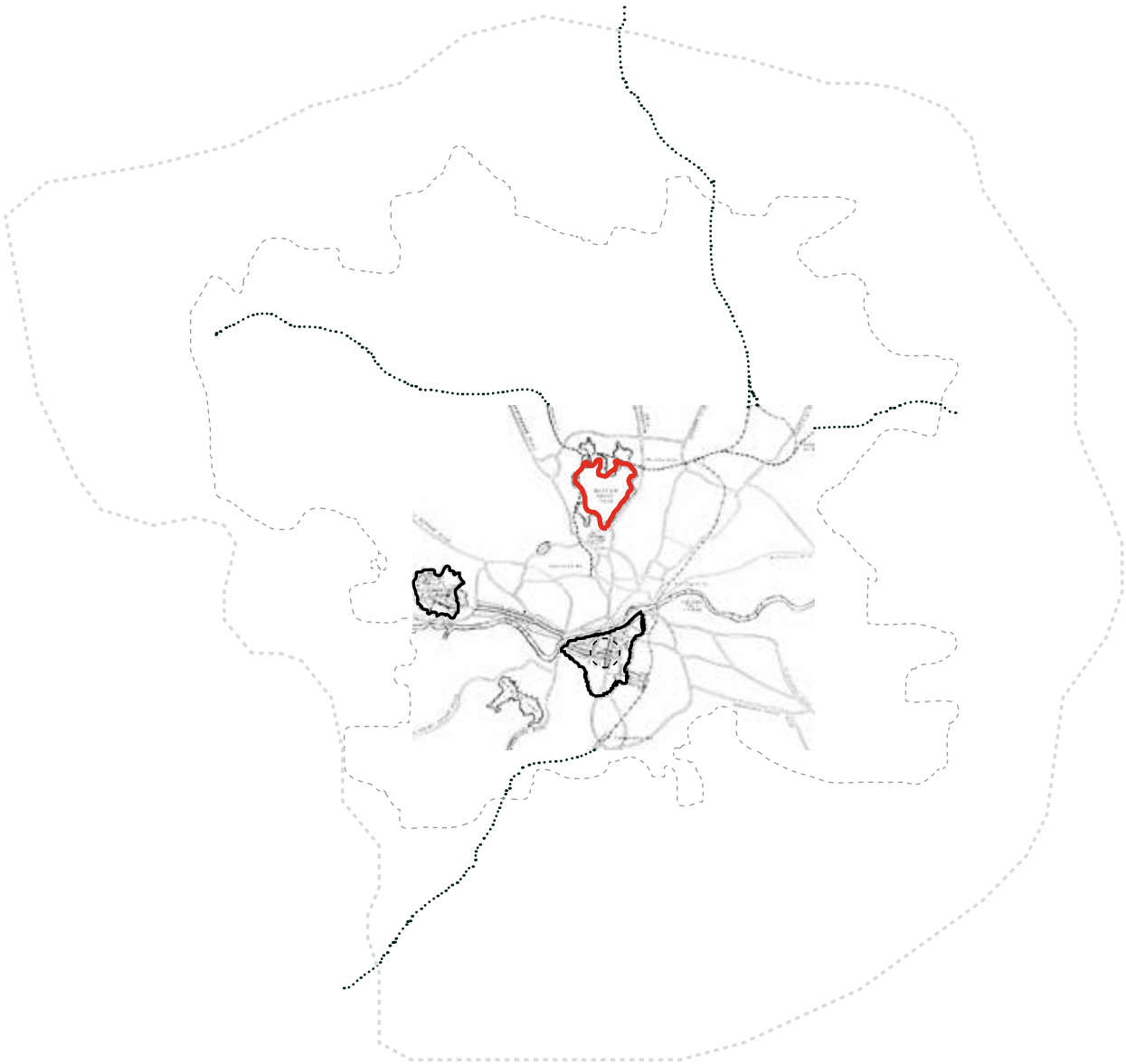
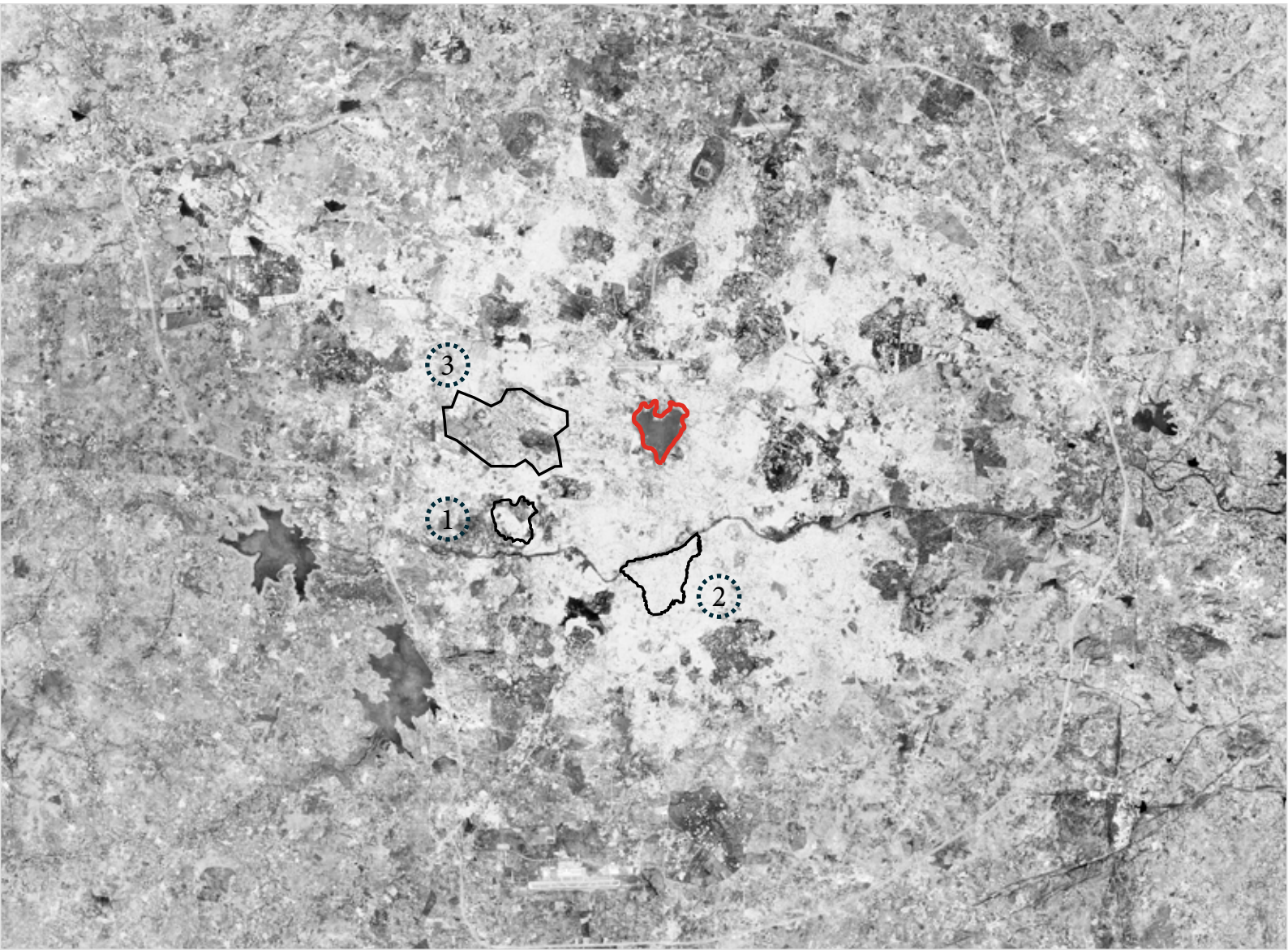
This once beautiful lake found mention in Phillip Meadows Taylor's 1839 book, "Confessions of a Thug", based on confessions of Syeed Amir Ali, a notorious thug of the time. *"As we passed it a strong breeze had arisen, and the surface was curled into a thousand waves, whose white crests as they broke sparkled like diamonds, and threw their spray into our faces as they dashed against the stone work of the embankment. We stood a long time gazing upon the beautiful prospect, so new to us all, and wondering whether the sea, of which we had heard so much, could be anything like what was before us."*

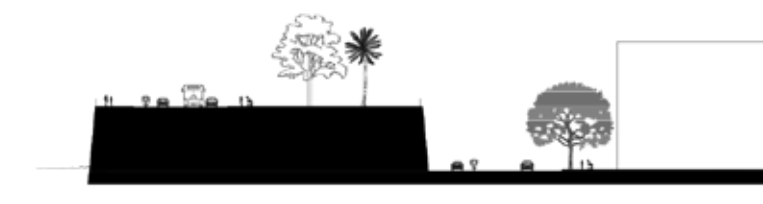
The bund, built across the tank's eastern edge became a connecting corridor with the establishment of the British settlement to the north. This evolved as an important connection and was subsequently widened in 1946 and was the first initiative towards developing the lakefront and making the bund more than just a carriageway. It was further widened in 1987-1988 to include a linear public park lined with statues of famous personalities.

The water in the lake was reasonably good till 1976 post which increased urban activity due to population influx has led to deterioration in its water quality with industrial waste and sewage diverted into it over the past four decades. Though sewage treatment plants have been installed on its western edge the lake and its natural ecological system have deteriorated drastically. Through various initiatives, subsequent governments in the past two decades have been trying to clean the lake.



Maps showing the Hussain sagar lake in the context of the evolving city





Below and Top right- Satellite image showing Hussain Sagar's lakefront
Right- Different interventions along the waterfront (sections and plans)

The Hussainsagar Lake and Catchment Area Improvement Project (HCIP) was taken up by the HMDA (Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority) in 2008. The major works taken up under the project were construction and upgradation of sewerage treatment plants along the lake’s western edge.

In a newspaper article written by Anusha Puppala and featured in The News Minute, Hyderabad on 3rd March 2016, the agony of the common citizens in the face of rising pollution of the lake becomes obvious. In this article, the author writes on behalf of residents and visitors who are continuously agonized by the stench emanating from the Hussain Sagar Lake. Although being a desirable area to live around and a famous tourist spot, it is disappointing because of the quality of the water that is polluted by ‘floating waste material such as polythene bags, plastics, food-wrappers, debris from immersion of idols during festivals, domestic sewerage and solid waste from Balkapur, Banjara, Kukatpally and industrial effluents from Kukatpally Nala.’. She further writes that the project taken up by the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) with funding from the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) in November 2012 to restore the Hussain Sagar Lake is widely perceived as a failure by citizens as it has not improved the condition of the lake.

Prior to this, in 2000, the local government had constituted a special body called the Buddha Poor-nima Project Authority (BPPA) to redevelop, beautify and protect the area around the Hussain Sagar Lake. Late Architect Charles Correa was appointed as a consultant to prepare a masterplan for the beautification of the hussain sagar waterfront area. The spaces developed by the BPPA were: *(locations indicated on google earth image on page 60)*

1. Lumbini Park
2. NTR Gardens
3. Necklace Road
4. Peoples Plaza
5. NTR Memorial
6. Sanjeevaiah Park
7. Lakeview Park
8. Lumbini Laserium
9. P.V. Gyan Bhoomi
10. Hussain Sagar Lake
11. Sewerage Treatment Plant

Other than its ecological condition, that is largely due to the dumping of city waste, the other major setback that makes it inconvenient for the local citizens is the condition of its limit. Whereas on the east the 3km bund road built in the 16th century rises approximately 10m from the abutting area on its northern and western edges the lake is encircled by the railway tracks that were laid in

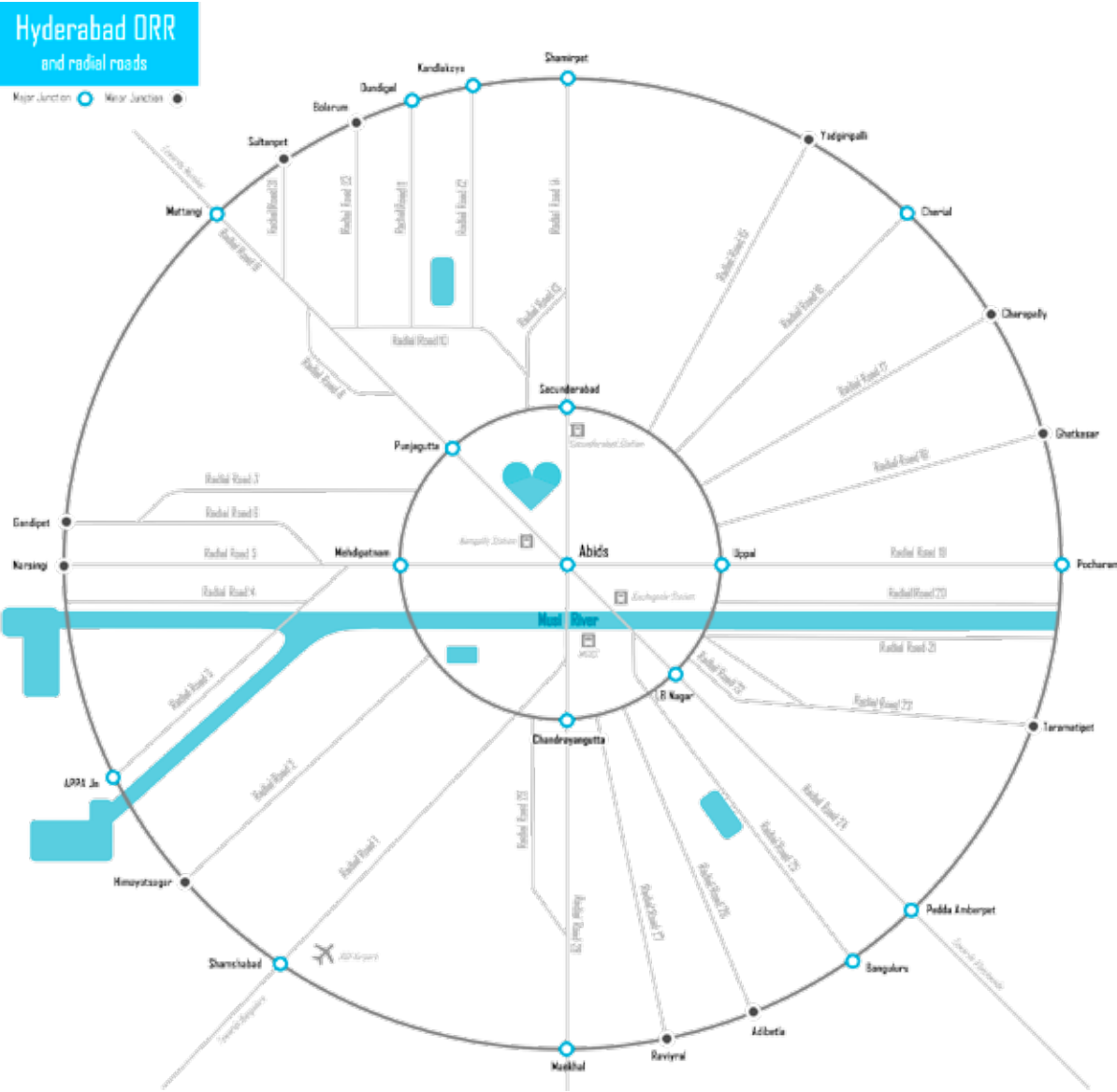
late 19th century. Only on its southern side is there continuity between the lakefront and the city. Therefore when in 2014 the Chief Minister of the state proposed densifying its western edge with skyscrapers there was a lot of skepticism amongst environmentalists, planners and architects alike regarding the idea.

This was best expressed by Hyderabad based architect Shankar Narayan in an newspaper article in which he attempted to present a balanced appraisal of the Telangana Chief Minister’s grand and ambitious vision to ring the urban lake with glass and steel skyscrapers. He writes that there is no doubt in the fact that an attempt to Manhattanize the city, is a seductive idea which will change the dynamics of the place but brings to attention the fact that building of skyscraper in democratic cities is the natural consequence of ‘favorable business and economic policies, suitable land and building regulations, intensity of the host city’s connect to the global scenario and the quality of its infrastructure’. While questioning the practicality of building a wall of skyscrapers in an area where there is no available continuous strip of land and which is fragmented because of the existing railway line, he concludes that the public nature of this area should not be compromised for the relatively whimsical want of spectacle.

In his book ‘The Seduction of Place’ Joseph Rykwert while writing about 20th century phenomenon of urban growth and renewal, in the context of urban centers like Manhattan, Shanghai, London and Paris, discusses the repercussions of homogenized planning by over-simplifying a complex reality. He talks about the fallacies of urban renewal through popularly adopted strategies like the skyscraper phenomenon, private capital investment, car centric infrastructure and uninformed restoration of heritage buildings that tend to be non-contextual leading to socially in-cohesive solutions. While concluding by emphasizing on the importance of public participation, as encouraged by the New Urbanists, he states- ‘make little plans and lots of them thus contradicting the apocryphal quote by Daniel Burnham (the author of the vast Chicago plan of 1909)- ‘Make no small plans... they have no magic to stir men’s blood’

In 2012 the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) officially declared Hussain Sagar as ‘The Heart of the World’. The lake which is the largest artificial lake in Asia is unique because of its size and shape. But before it gains more recognition as ‘The Heart of the World’ it first needs to connect better with the city and its own immediate surroundings and be rid of pollutants that make its vicinity rather unhealthy and uninhabitable.

Below- Road Network Map prepared by Harsha Devunapalli for Hyderabad Urban Lab (HUL).



2.2

Learning from Barcelona's waterfront development

Appropriating urban infrastructure

Below- Archival image of the Barcelona waterfront in the early 20th century.
Source- <http://bcnwaterfront.blogspot.com.es/>



By the end of the 19th century the then industrial city of Barcelona had lost contact with its waterfront. Shanty settlements of immigrants flooding to the city for employment, railway tracks running along the coastline and heavy industries proliferated along its coastline increasingly distancing the city and its people from the sea. In the early 1980s the city of Barcelona saw the opportunity to host the 1992 Olympics and subsequently Forum 2004 as a way to improve the liveability of the city and its neighbourhoods and to develop its waterfront as a continuous public space making it more accessible to its people.

The factors that made these transformations successful were strong political will and concerned effort by planning professionals to use the money coming in for the Olympics not only to construct new projects but also regenerate the derelict parts of the city. One of the main things to be resolved on the waterfront was the existing rail and road infrastructure. The way forward adopted was to appropriate urban infrastructure and make them into public spaces that worked well on all scales instead of ending up as non-places. Thus mobility and accessibility was thought of in conjunction with land-use and urban form. Secondly the section evolved as an important tool for creating complex and varying experiences generated by pedestrian or vehicular movement between topographic levels that maintain inter-dependency and visual connection¹. Starting in the 1980s series of projects and interventions along the coast were implemented that fit into the larger vision for the city, Moll de la fusta by Manuel sola de morales, being the earliest and thus most important in terms of setting precedents for the ones to follow.

While restrospecting on these project Sola de Morales in his paper on public spaces /collective-spaces writes about how in most European countries, the distinction between public and private since the end of the 19th century has led to 'rigid fossilization of the concept of public space'. He delves into how decisions for locating public spaces, in cities like Barcelona, have been mostly based on availability of public land without due consideration to its relationship with the private

1. Marga Munar Bauza and Aquiles Gonzalez Raventos. *Urban infrastructures: how installations make a city in Barcelona*. Paper written for the ICE proceedings, Cardiff, 22 June 2015

Below- Before and after images of the Moll de la fusta
1. Source- https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/62/Moll_de_la_Fusta_i_passeig_de_Colom,_a_Barcelona_ANC-1-402-N-10300.jpg
2. Source- https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/62/Moll_de_la_Fusta_i_passeig_de_Colom,_a_Barcelona_ANC-1-402-N-10300.jpg

Below right- Before and after images of the Barcelona beachfront
3/ 4 Source- <http://i2.wp.com/blog.bearing-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/The-opening-of-the-waterfront.png>

1



2



sector; thus what he advocates is ‘urbanizing the private’ and ‘absorbing it into the public sphere’. He concludes by proposing a theoretical shift by not conceiving public spaces as islands in themselves and further stating that good cities are those in which private buildings are also viewed as public elements and ‘serve as vehicles for social meanings and values that reach beyond themselves’.

3



4



Below- Satellite image showing Barcelona's waterfront
Right- Different interventions along the waterfront (sections and plans)



A



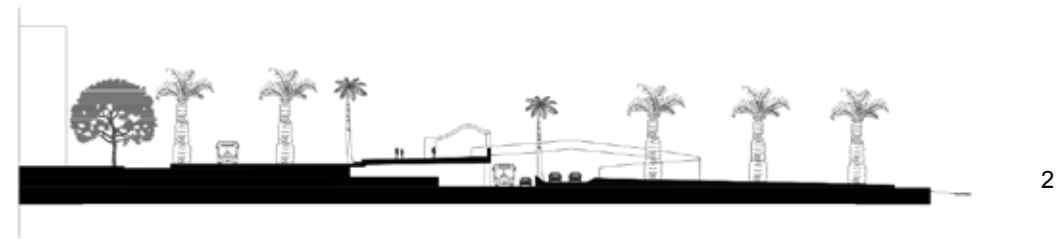
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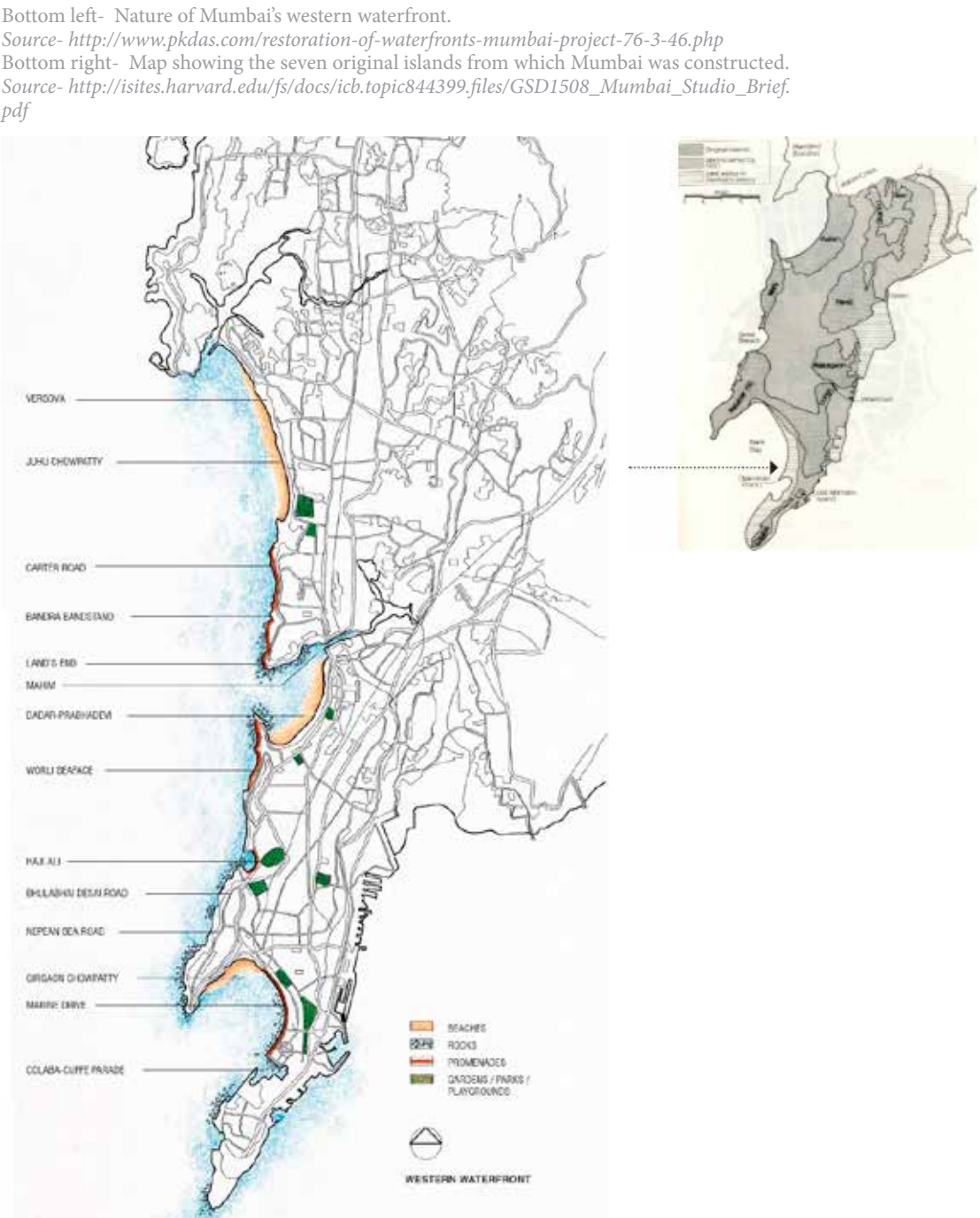
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2.3

Learning from Mumbai’s waterfront development

People participation in public projects



In terms of a change in attitude, the post-industrial world, seems to have taken a full circle to reinstate waterfronts as central to urbanization. Waterfronts are being increasingly seen as economically lucrative urban spaces appealing to the aesthetics of global commerce. What then becomes crucial in such a redevelopment is to balance economics with the creation of a truly public space that is accessible to all strata of society. Inequity in public spaces is becoming a growing danger in the face of most urban redevelopment projects that are aimed to attract capital and in a dense city like Mumbai, the importance for maintaining an inclusive nature for public spaces becomes all the more important. The onus of this falls on the waterfront areas as they are the only lung spaces in a city where land is subjected to encroachment both by public and private actors because of its high value. From being seven different islands ruled by the Portuguese in the 16th century to what we see today as a continuous landform, Mumbai has been the product of incessant land reclamation projects that were initiated by William Hornby (British Governor of Bombay from 1771-1784).

One such reclamation project was Marine Drive that was conceived in the 1860s by a private company called the Back Bay Reclamation Company (BRC) constituting important citizens, to reclaim the whole of the back bay from the tip of Malabar Hill to the end of Colaba. By the 1930s the Marine Drive was lined by Art Deco houses built for the cream of the society. Nariman Point and Cuffe Parade started developing as business districts with high rises dotting the reclaimed land. Through subsequent years and especially in the late half of the 20th century greed for land and money saw the back bay reclamation project ridden with scams which was finally brought to public light. The reclamation project was halted and thus remains incomplete as on today.

Though a controversial project the Marine Drive waterfront along with the Girgaum Chowpatty beach present an excellent example of public space that though were initiated in the vested interests of private actors has evolved into a truly public urban space.

1. Image of Marine drive filled with pedestrians.
Source- <http://p.imgci.com/db/PICTURES/CMS/123300/123351.jpg>
2. Image of Carter road promenade. Source- PK Das and Associates



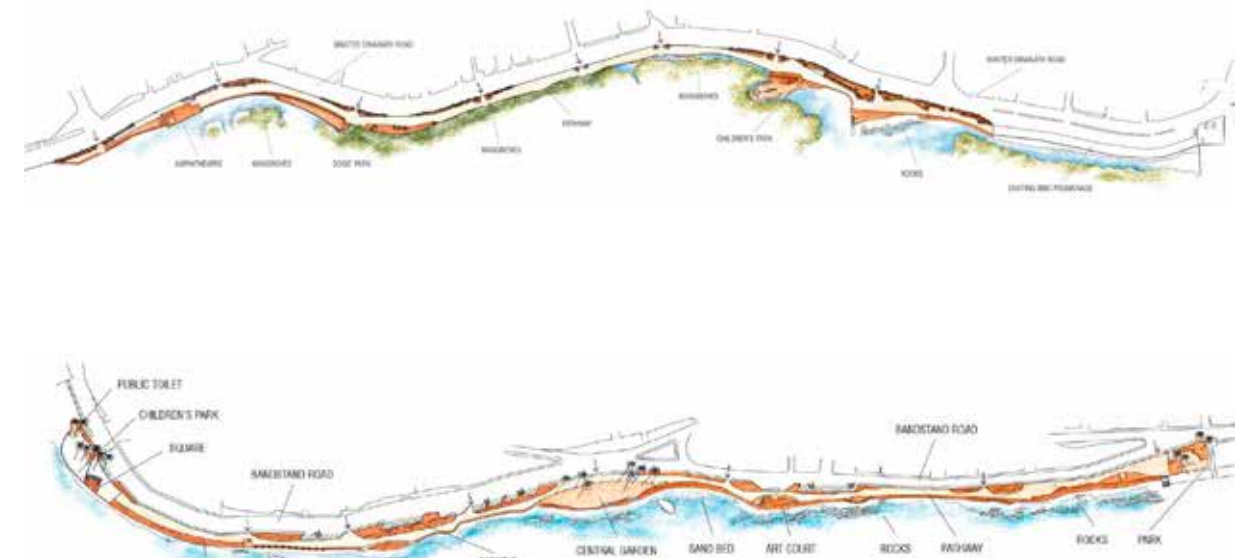
“If any one of us had been around 80 years ago, Marine Drive would never have got built. After all, there are many compelling reasons to oppose it. It brings more traffic. It involves reclamation (that filthy eleven-letter word!), adding more buildings between us and the sea. It’s obviously very bad news. Why don’t we just continue using Queen’s Road? Yet, aren’t you glad it happened? Not only is Marine Drive a vital artery for the city, it is also without any doubt Bombay’s single more powerful urban image. The presence of this great gesture, precisely defining the edge between land and water is one magnificent sweep, is what sustains us as we battle with the urban mess and chaos that constitute 99 per cent of Bombay (just as the imagery of Manhattan’s skyline creates the élan necessary to survive Brooklyn or Queens)”

Charles Correa. *A Place in the Shade*. The Point of Balance. Pg 103. 2010

Running for a length of 4.3 km the waterfront promenade 4m in width is a continuous surface paved as a combination of concrete paver blocks and granite stone. On the water edge the granite pavement steps up and folds into a continuous seat. The promenade is designed with a single row of trees that is aligned along the inside edge of the promenade towards the main carriageway.

Marine drive is one of the most popular places in the city for daily walkers or people who just want to sit and take in the vastness of the ocean.

Unlike the Marine Drive which was an attempt to boost real estate the Bandstand Promenade and Carter Road were projects that were undertaken not to facilitate development but to reclaim the waterfront for the city’s public. Interestingly these projects were funded by citizen welfare groups and designed by PK Das, popularly known as Architect – Activist. PK Das’s priority, while developing public spaces, has been to establish a very close relation between architecture and people by involving them in a participatory planning process. The projects use natural paving materials to create an extended promenade of varying widths and topography thus allowing for multiple uses and creating differential spatial relations with the sea. In this sense also it contrasts with the single stroke gesture of Marine Drive.

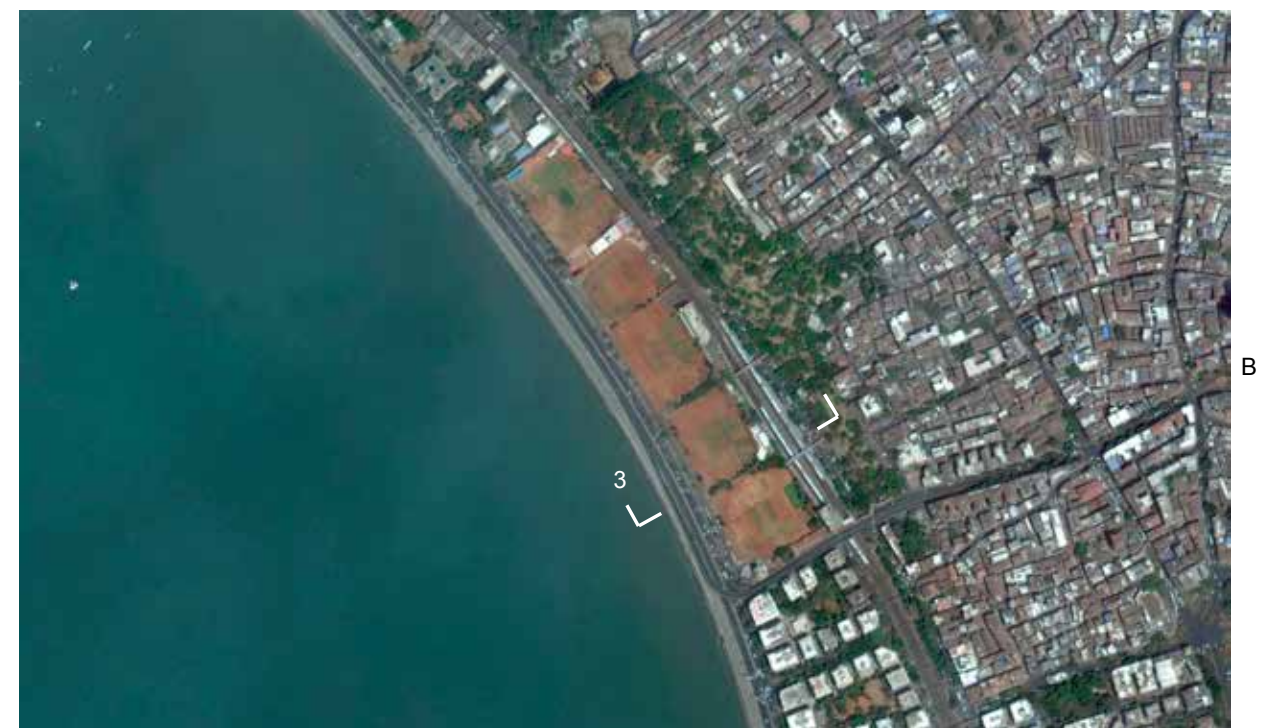
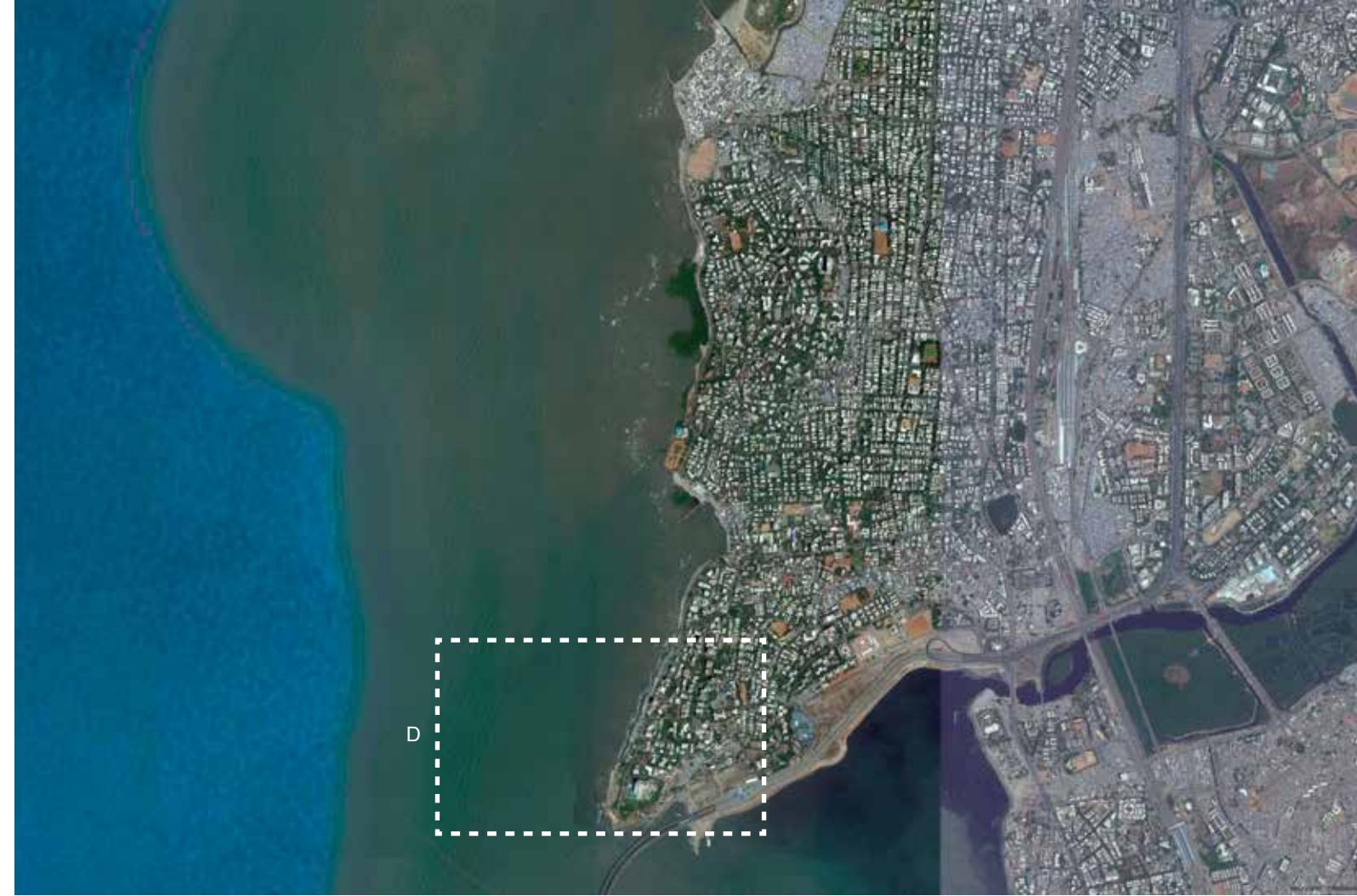


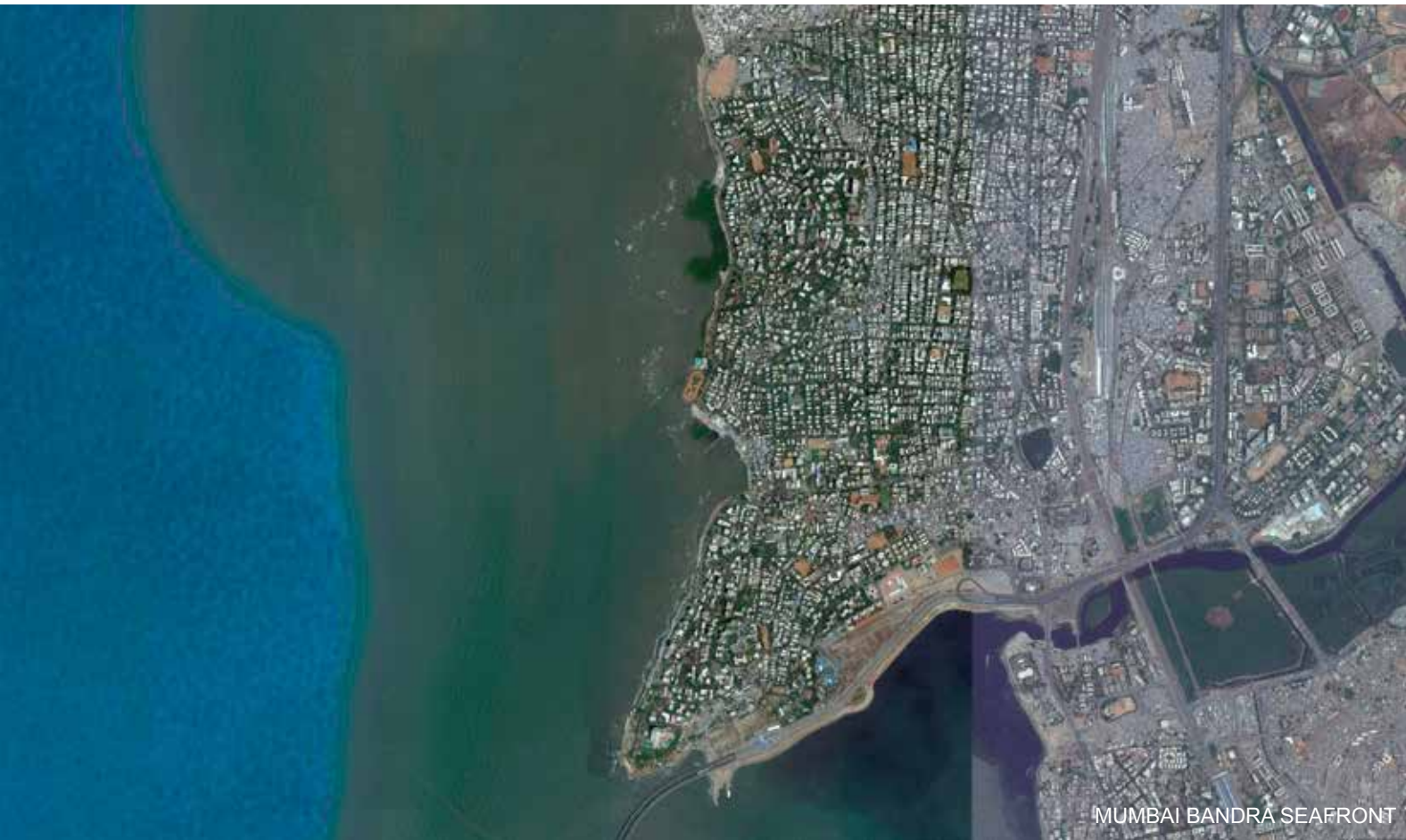
Below- Images of Marive drive
Right- Images of Bandstand and Carter road. Source- PK Das and Associates





Below and Top right- Satellite image showing Mumbai's waterfront
Right- Different interventions along the waterfront (sections and plans)





MUMBAI BANDRA SEAFRONT



HUSSAIN SAGAR LAKEFRONT



MUMBAI MARINE DRIVE



BARCELONA WATERFRONT

3 The Architectural Project

Urban inserts along Necklace road, Hyderabad

3.1 Situation Necklace Road

Aerial images of necklace road. Source- Agam Rao, Panoramia.



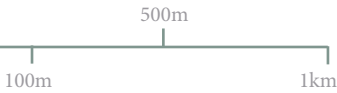
Necklace road, built in 1996, was developed as a 3.6km road along Hussain sagar lake's western edge. Subsequently it was absorbed into the agenda of the BPPA (Buddha Poornima Project Authority), set up to conserve and beautify the lake, and was conceived like a boulevard with linear parks and food courts along its length. Unfortunately because of the railway tracks that run parallelly and alongside it the road does not connect with its urban built context and hence serves for easy mobility within the city than anything else. Therefore when in 2014 the Chief Minister of the state proposed building skyscrapers along this road it was not convincing because there is not enough land between the railways and the necklace road.

Though the Necklace road strings along with it a series of open spaces in the form of play areas, linear parks, recreational facilities, restaurants etc these spaces are disconnected from the city and lack social control because of no continuous urban activity within a distance of 50m from their boundaries. The area becomes densely packed only during mass gathering like religious festivals or political rallies or music concerts.

Considering the Hussain Sagar lake is no longer peripheral to the city and occupies a central space it needs to be connected better with the city in terms of improving pedestrian connectivity across the railways and also ensuring that people who use this space feel secure. An approach that is balanced between development and conservation needs to be adopted to ensure that the area becomes more accessible to citizens while ensuring that there is no excessive ecological damage.



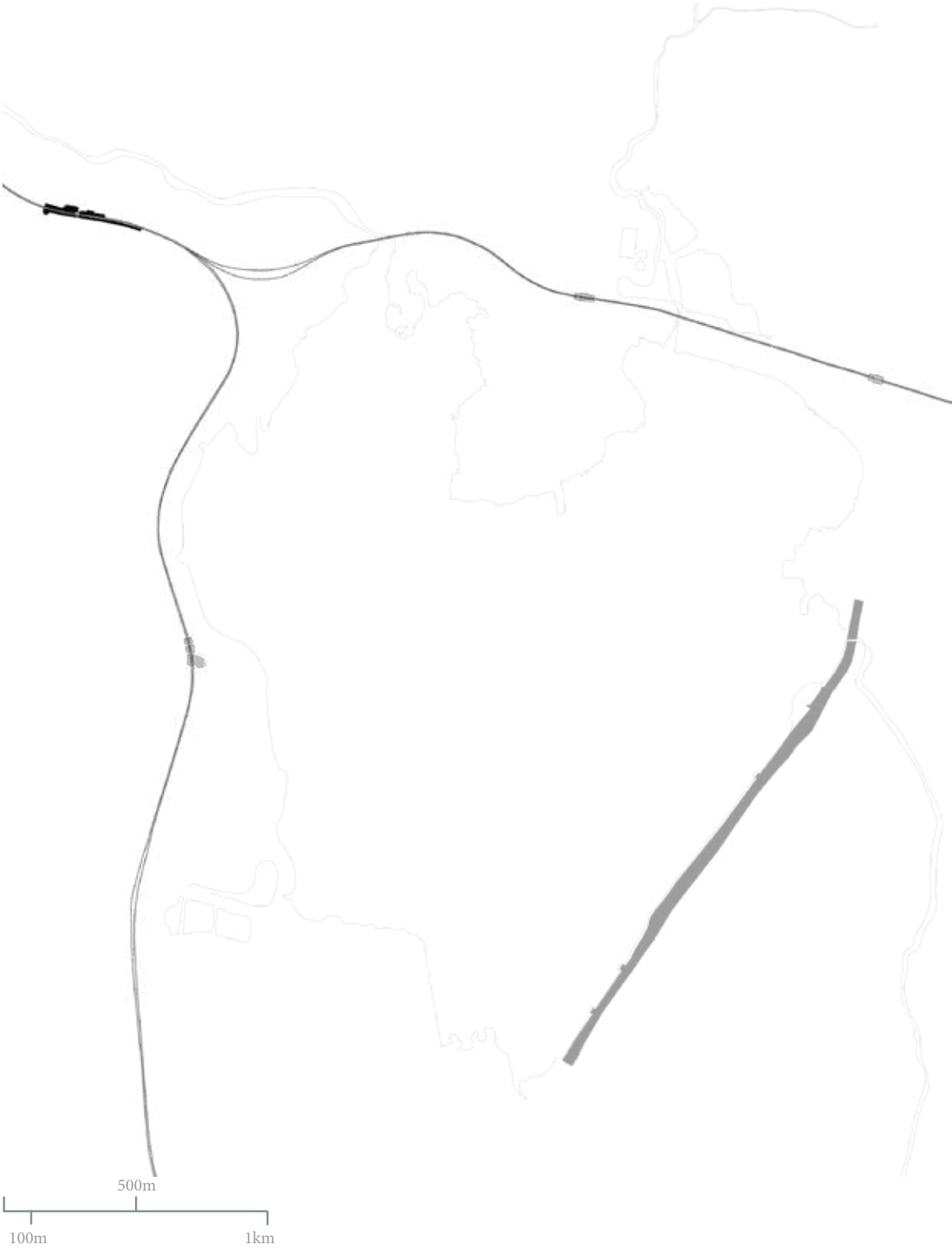
Satellite image of Hussain Sagar and its immediate surroundings.



Drawing indicating the existing water edge of Hussain Sagar lake and extent of the bund built across it's eastern edge



Drawing indicating the existing water edge of Hussain Sagar lake and existing railways lines



Drawing indicating the existing water edge of Hussain Sagar lake and existing road network



Drawing indicating the existing water edge of landuses as per the masterplan



Drawing indicating the existing water edge of Hussain Sagar lake, existing railway lines, road network and alignment of the metro rail under construction.



Drawing indicating figure ground plan of the surrounding built context of the lake



Drawing indicating the planned and designed open spaces along the existing water edge.



Images showing the existing condition of lake edge.



3.2

Accessing the lakefront

New relationships with the city

The first step to intervene along the necklace road lakefront was to study road and pedestrian connectivity and identify points along this composite stretch of road and railways where the impact of a new connection would be effective. To begin with three locations are proposed based on the connection to local roads and more importantly to the proposed metro stops.

The purpose of intervention is an obvious one- that of appropriating urban infrastructure and making the lakefront more accessible. The easiest way to do this would be to have skywalks and pedestrian bridges across the railway lines. This though would be a cheaper solution would be ineffective because psychologically these bridges would not be appealing because of intermittent usage. It would then require the constant monitoring of police personnel which is undesirable. Also given the character of the buildings in the vicinity, that have no real identity, this area desperately asks for architectural intervention that is defining not only sculpturally but also in intention.



1. Pavilion constructed along a race course maidan.
2. Park Hotel elevated courtyard



3.3 Urban insert

New forms of public space for the city

“The Tank Bund used to be the prized walkway of the city with its pristine surroundings. Many famous people of Hyderabad, liked to take their evening walks there, the most prominent of them being Nawab Dawood Jung, who built the first pavilion on the banks of the lake,” recalls Nawab Shafath Ali Khan, the great grand son of Nawab Sultan Ali Khan Bahadur, erstwhile Prime Minister of Hyderabad State. “The sprawling artificial lake divided and united the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad”

Reported by Karthik Pasupulate. *Hussain Sagar, more than just a lake, Times of India, 15 August 2015, Hyderabad*

Was the first pavilion, as reported in the newspaper extract above, built on the banks of the Hussain Sagar, accessible only for the members of the royal family or was it also meant to be occupied by the common man? The history of baradaris or pavilions in the city is one of exclusion. This building typology, that proliferated the landscape of Hyderabad, built on the peaks of hillocks or on the periphery of recreational grounds (maidans), was meant for the pleasure and enjoyment of only the royal family. This appropriation of elevated spaces in the city can also be seen in design of contemporary buildings like the Park hotel¹ built by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill Architects along Necklace road or in the way the city’s highest hillocks have been occupied by the wealthy.

While advocating for elevated spaces in the city for all and to resolve the issue of accessibility urban inserts have been conceived at three points along Necklace road. These inserts aspire to be purposeful reproductions of a familiar topography and seek historic inspiration in the appreciation and occupation of such topography albeit by the city’s public. The inserts manifest themselves as platforms that not only span the railway line, while helping appropriate urban infrastructure and improving accessibility to the lakefront, but also serve as a new form of public space for the city and its people.

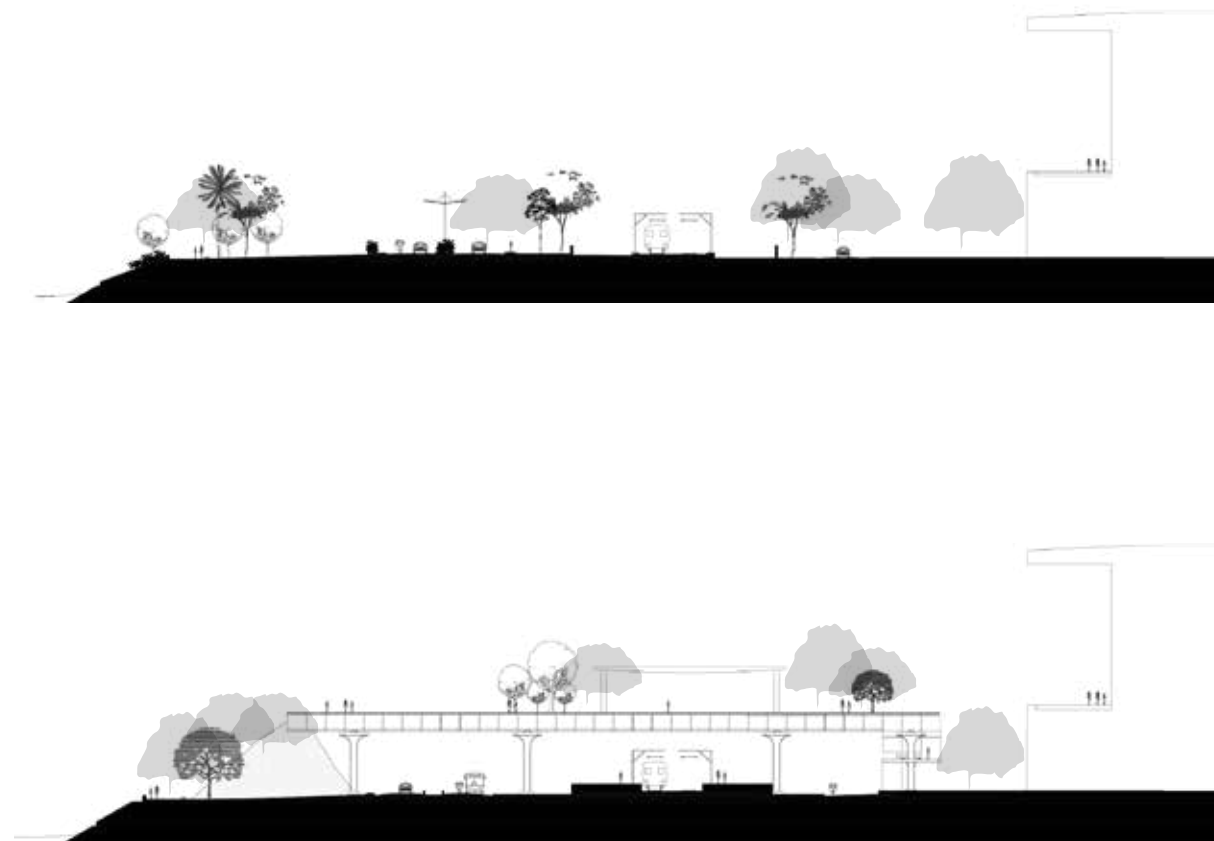
¹ The Park hotel has an elevated courtyard with an infinity pool, restaurant and bar that provides occupants with a panoramic view of the lake.

3.4 Uses

Pavilions of social interaction

Below right- Parody of Rene Magritte's 'Golconde' painting
Below- Existing and Proposed sections across necklace road. The latter showing the elevated platform for 'all' as against the exclusive elevated court of the Park h.otel

The platforms have been conceived such that they can contain spaces that will complement the surrounding area. While serving as the roof for the MMTS stations and other railway related functions on the ground floor, the platform is envisaged to also serve as floor space for a pavilion that can contain spaces related to public use. Considering the predominantly residential nature of the surrounding built form the pavilions could contain uses that range from day care centres, local markets, libraries to cultural spaces or museums.



3.5 Materiality

Using the city's excesses

1. Photograph showing a typical viaduct module used for supporting the metro rail, Hyderabad.
Source- http://www.thehindu.com/multimedia/dynamic/02025/HY28METRO1_2025825f.jpg
2. Photograph of a granite quarry along the Outer Ring Road.
Source- http://www.atlascopco.com/mbrangeus/pressroom_new/mb1700hyderabad/



The urban inserts will be symbolic in the transfer of discarded natural materials from the immediate cityscape that have undergone rampant destruction for urban and infrastructural development of the city. The materials of construction are envisaged to be a mix of urban and natural materials that bring out the contrasting nature of their point of placement; at the interface between the lake and the city. Thus three different material assemblages are considered;

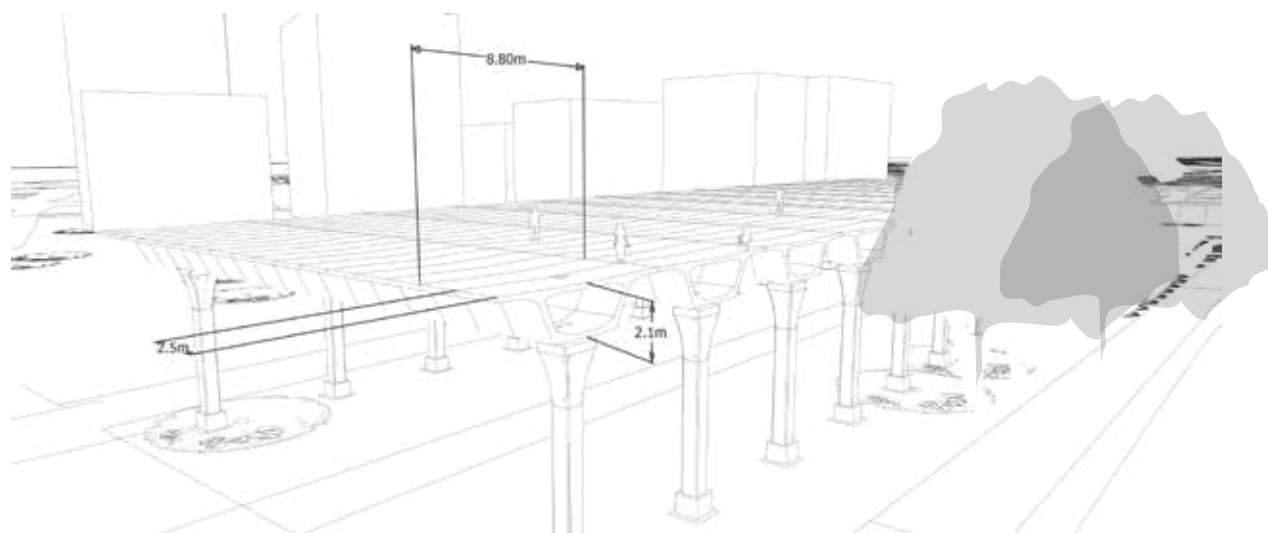
1.) The Platform- This will be constructed by using the same concrete viaduct modules that are being used to build the city's elevated metro rail. By using materials from the extended city the idea is to embrace the recent transformations in the city albeit in a new way.

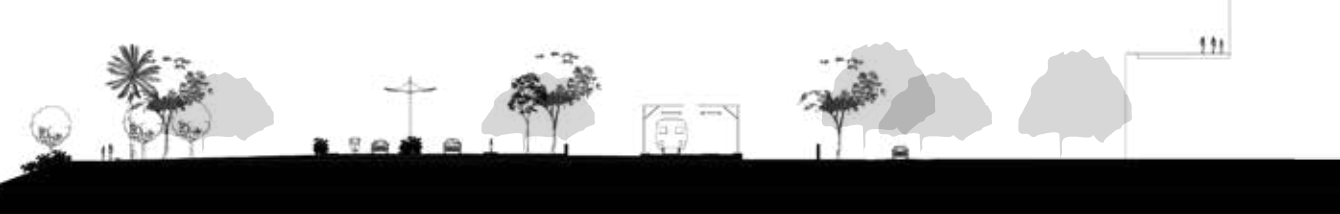
2.) Bridge and elevated pathway across railway line- The bridges that will span across railway lines especially at the railway stations will be built of steel. These elevated pathways can emanate out of the platforms and connect to the city as a meandering path. This is suggested as a possibility that can be implemented later.

3.) Pavilion- The pavilion's structure is proposed of steel. The floating boxes of spaces it will shelter will be of standard red bricks that are made in Hyderabad.

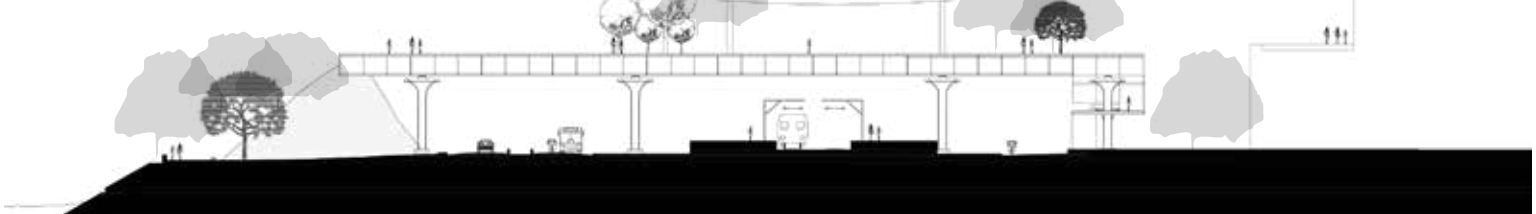
4.) Earthworks- The platforms can be accessed not only by urban ramps but also by slowly meandering pathways that are made possible by merging the elevated platform to the lakefront by earthwork. The earthwork will be retained by stone walls and gabions that will be built out of fragments of granite rocks that have been blasted to make way for new road infrastructure in the city's periphery.

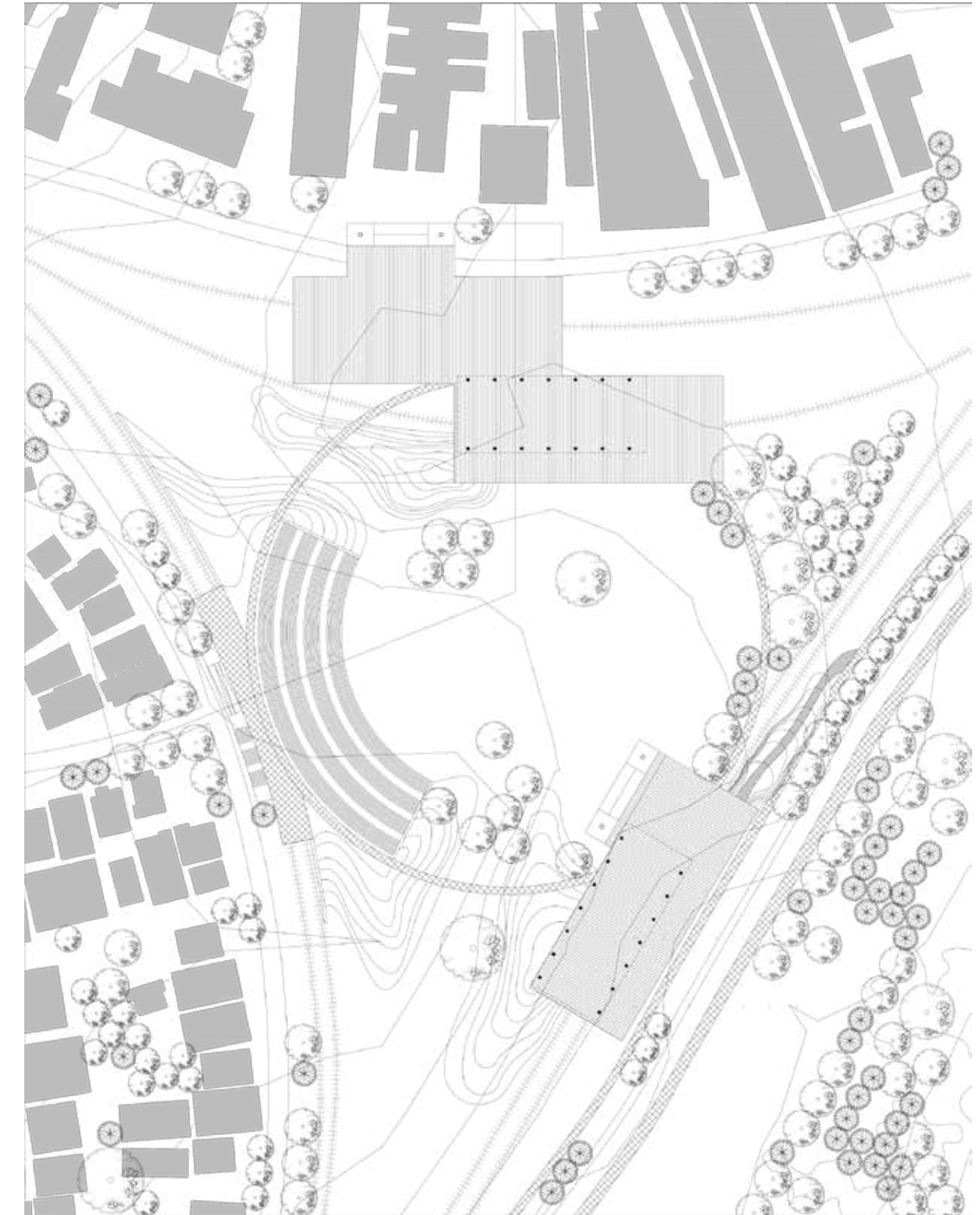
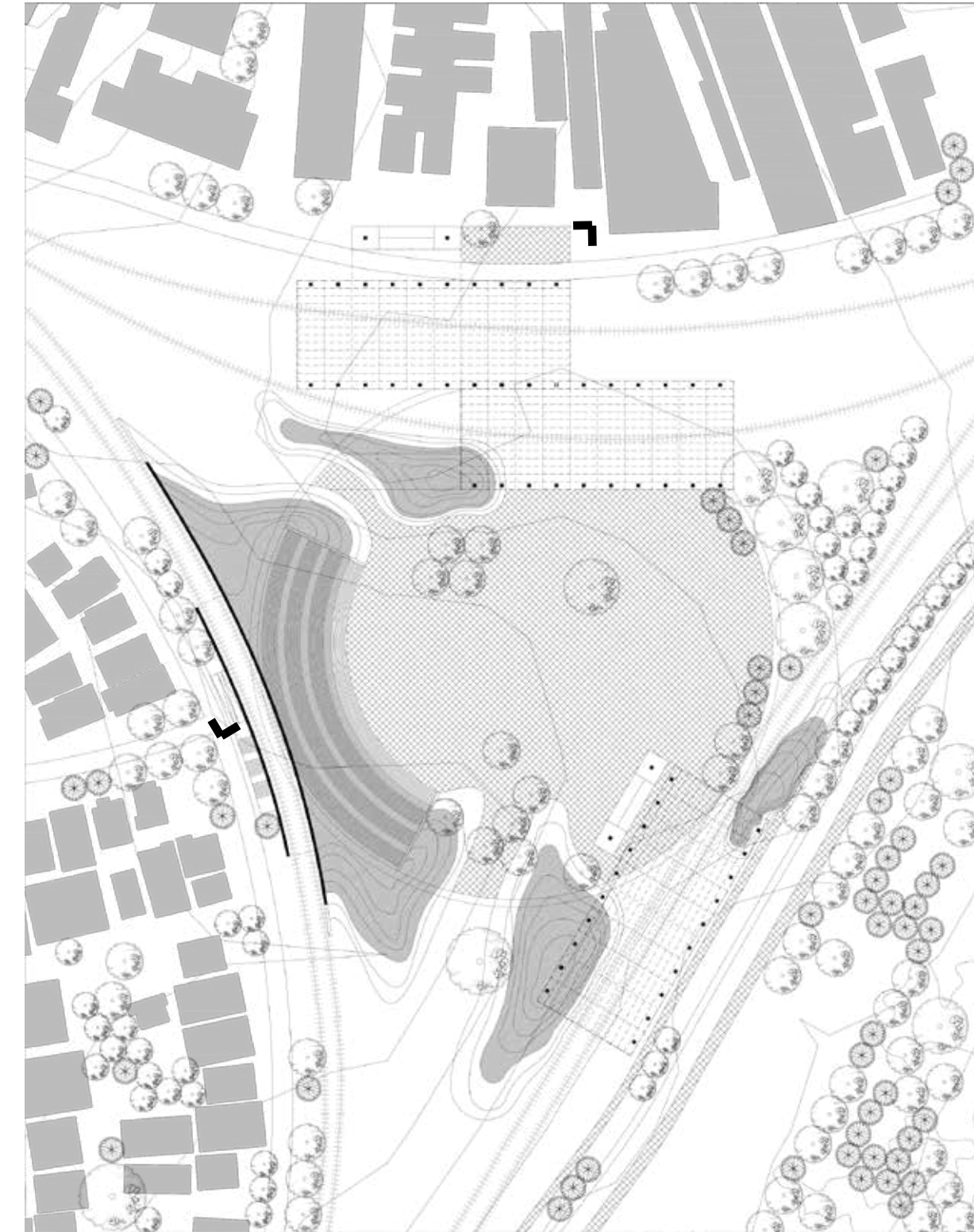
Design Drawings



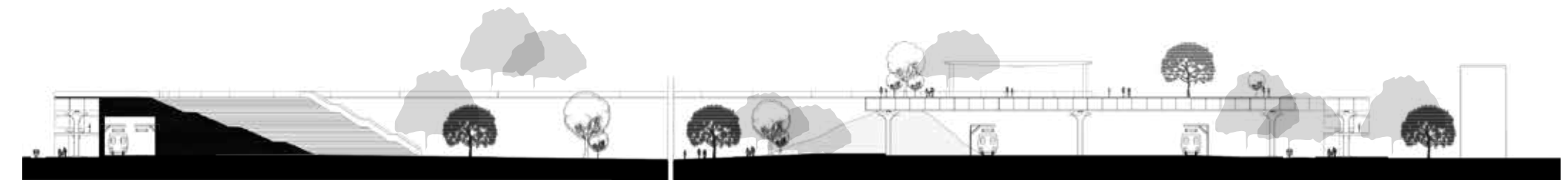


Proposed design intervention at A
 1. Existing situation
 2. Ground Floor Plan
 3. First Floor Plan
 4. Existing section
 5. Proposed section



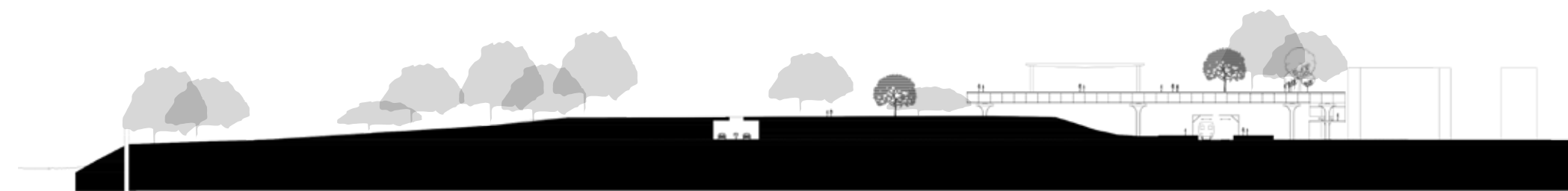


Proposed design intervention at B
 1. Existing situation
 2. Ground Floor Plan
 3. First Floor Plan
 4. Existing section
 5. Proposed section





Proposed design intervention at C
 1. Existing situation
 2. Ground Floor Plan
 3. First Floor Plan
 4. Existing section
 5. Proposed section



Conclusion

While straddling three scales of small, medium and large architecture should aspire to simultaneously be an object, a place and a well-fitting part of the puzzle that is the city. This thesis aimed to demonstrate this understanding through a hypothetical design exercise along the Hussain Sagar lakefront in Hyderabad city. Waterfront urban projects in Mumbai city were studied because Mumbai is simultaneously a developed and a developing city and hence makes it easier to understand both worlds and its problems. With other second tier cities aspiring for economic growth similar to Mumbai it becomes imperative to study some of the city’s projects to understand how they negotiate complexity. Barcelona, on the other hand, a prototypical European city, is studied through everyday living, for its successful implementation of urban projects in derelict environments that have helped mitigate decay. The thesis, through the means of a design project, attempted to explore concepts of identity, continuity, equality and meaning in all scales of architecture and its contextualization.

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